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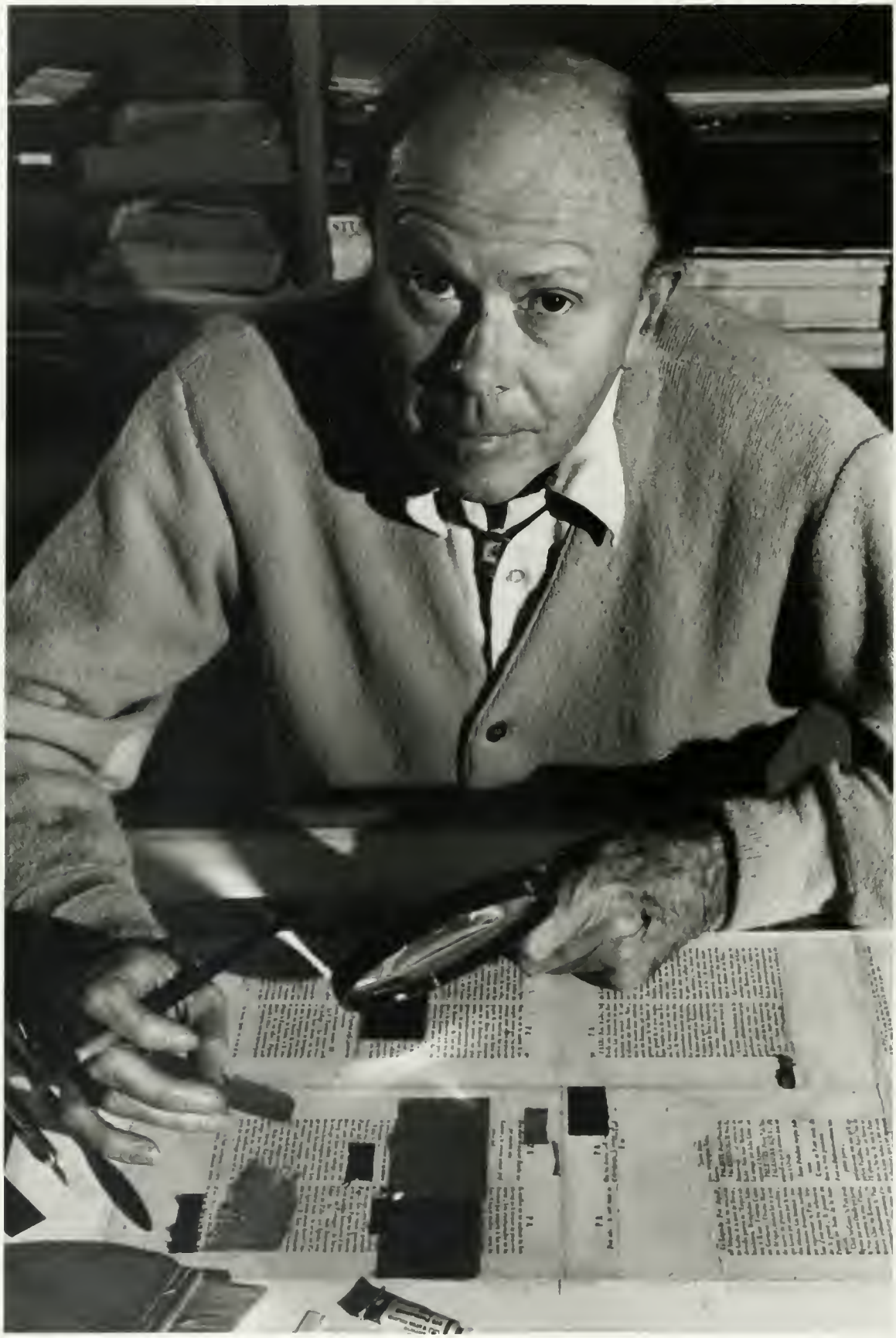

LOS ANGELES ART COMMUNITY: GROUP PORTRAIT

William Dole

Interviewed by Gerald Nordland

Completed under the auspices
of the
Oral History Program
University of California
Los Angeles

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LOS ANGELES ART COMMUNITY: GROUP PORTRAIT

This interview is one of a series, entitled "Los Angeles Art Community: Group Portrait," funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities and conducted from July 1, 1975 to March 31, 1977 by the UCLA Oral History Program. The project was directed jointly by Page Ackerman, University Librarian, and Gerald Nordland, Director, UCLA Art Galleries, and administered by Bernard Galm, Director, Oral History Program. After selection of interview candidates and interviewers, the Program assumed responsibility for the conduct of all interviews and their processing.

CONTENTS

Introduction. vi

Interview History. xiv

TAPE NUMBER: I, Side One (December 6, 1975). 1

Childhood in Indiana--Encouragement from grade school and high school art teachers--English, then art major at Olivet College--Working one year as George Rickey's apprentice on a mural--A teaching credential and discovering the pleasures of art education--Summer session at Mills College with Laszlo Moholy-Nagy and Gyorgy Kepes--Marriage to Kathryn Holcomb--Military service--Transfer to Spokane--After a brief stint in commercial art, enrollment at University of California, Berkeley--Staying on to teach the introductory drawing course --Faculty appointment, University of California, Santa Barbara--"Proper doctorates" and alternatives: exhibitions.

TAPE NUMBER: I, Side Two (December 6, 1975). 19

Development of the art department, UCSB--Sabbatical followed by department chairmanship--Never enough space--Increasing enrollment--Isla Vista rebellion --Alfred Moir as chairman--Proposed separation of studio and art history disciplines--Faculty turnover--History of the campus art gallery: Max Beckmann exhibition, a Christmas show, Rico Lebrun drawings, Esther Bear's collection--Sedgwick and Story collections.

TAPE NUMBER: II, Side One (December 6, 1975). 36

"What . . . gave me the notion . . . of creating works of art?"--Beautifully illustrated magazines, traditional artists' tools, and books by F. Hopkinson Smith--An impressive boyhood trip to Chicago--Vanity Fair--Olivet College and its celebrated visitors--Joseph Brewer's collections of art and art books--Bay Area artists, 1940s--Working in several

mediums concurrently--Solo exhibition at Santa Barbara Museum, 1951--Diminishing work with oils--A collection of antique Japanese papers, first work in collage--A second collection of antique papers, this time in Florence--Beginnings of collage as a favored medium.

TAPE NUMBER: II, Side Two (December 6, 1975). 56

The collage tradition as influence or justification--Discovering, then abandoning collage for descriptive (landscape) images: "Making something look like something else can get awfully cute"--"Memos" of an office "landscape"--A more materials-oriented approach--Procedures--Works: Ad Hoc, Haybarn, Strata Data, Bibliophile, and others--The qualities of various papers--Printed or written words as compositional elements.

TAPE NUMBER: III, Side One (Undated). 74

Galleries and dealers: Geddis-Martin (Santa Barbara), Duveen-Graham (New York), Edith Halpert's Downtown Gallery (New York), Bertha Lewinson (Los Angeles), Esther Bear (Santa Barbara), Rex Evans (Los Angeles), Jodi Scully (Los Angeles), Staempfli Gallery (New York), Springer Gallery (Berlin), Sagittarius (Rome), Antonio Souza (Mexico City), Neil McRoberts (London)--Kurt Schwitters's work.

TAPE NUMBER: III, Side Two (Undated). 92

Schwitters--Scale--The collage work of Pablo Picasso, Georges Braque, Max Ernst, Anne Ryan, Alberto Burri, Jean Varda, Joseph Cornell, and Saul Steinberg.

TAPE NUMBER: IV [Video session] (February 21, 1977). . . 100

Touring the exhibition "William Dole Retrospective 1960-1975" at Santa Barbara Museum of Art--At Dole's house--In Dole's studio, making a collage.

Index. 119

INTRODUCTION

This oral history records an interview with William Dole (1917-1983), who at the time of his death was the senior professor of painting in the Department of Art at the University of California, Santa Barbara. The interviews were recorded in three settings, all in Santa Barbara and all central to his mature life: the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, of which he was an honorary trustee and where he exhibited frequently; the house at 342 East Los Olivos, where he and his wife Kate lived for many years and brought up their seven children; and his studio on the UCSB campus.

In the first part of the video portion of this oral history (Tape IV), Bill takes us on a gallery tour of a 1977 retrospective exhibition of about forty of his pictures made between 1947 and the early 1970s. It opens with a self-portrait in pencil and watercolor which he liked and which has always puzzled me because it seems to show a man that I never knew. We move quickly on, past affectionate drawings of three of his daughters as young girls, and then settle in to following him around the galleries as he discusses the oil and watercolor paintings and the collages in the show. He talks about them with characteristic modesty and understatement. He's a little like an instrumental musician who describes the great music he plays

only in terms of technique. Bill speaks primarily of pattern, color, texture, shapes, density, the ground, and other formal elements in his pictures. Of subject matter, he says very little specific, and that little only in passing. He describes a few pictures as "referential" to architecture or landscape and makes a few comments about weather conditions and locale. What he says about the formal elements is disarmingly simple, but listening to him makes clear why a critic once described his collages as "chamber music for the eyes." He was interested in lines, colors, shapes, and the like, but he was more interested in what they did to each other and the meanings they conveyed. The references in his pictures are not so much to landscape or architecture or any specific object as to how all things can work together agreeably.

In the second part of the video tape, we call on him in his house with Gerald Nordland, a longtime friend who was then director of the UCLA Art Galleries. It is a fine, spacious, old, family house within sight of the Old Mission. It is comfortable and unpretentious, but it seems strangely silent and empty without its accustomed swarm of living beings. I can't even remember being there when there weren't three or four cars parked on the street in front, when the front door wasn't wide open, and when there weren't half a dozen children and friends passing from room to room. Bill

shows us some of the rooms and guides us through his collection of curiosities--prints ranging from a fine Japanese woodcut to etchings by friends and former students--before settling down in the study to talk casually and a little disconnectedly about his life and his family. He brings out a dismayingly posed portrait of the whole family, so stiff and unnatural that I've always disliked it. He is amused by it and explains why everyone seems so hostile: it was taken early in the morning of the wedding of his second daughter, Hilary, in 1976, and everyone was tired and cross. It occurs to me that in the twenty-one years I have known the Doles, I've never seen a family fight or been aware of passionate tensions within the family. And I realize that I've always assumed his serene personality to be the whole family's, and that this is not a reasonable assumption. Besides Bill and Kate, there are seven energetic, intelligent human beings, brought up to be self-sufficient and independent within a very close and loving family solidarity. But if the whole family didn't take its personality from him, obviously--with the apparent exception only of this one photo--its members individually and as a group learned like him to keep their composure in the presence of nonfamily.

Finally, still with Gerry Nordland as interlocutor, we arrive at the real destination of this interview, Bill's

studio. It's in one of the UCSB's large, impersonal buildings, and before being converted to this good purpose, it was a classroom for art education, if memory serves me correctly. So, it isn't picturesque. But Bill wasn't either, and it is as neat and organized as a 747 cockpit, although a good deal more spacious. I remember Kate Dole's saying one time in an interview that Bill planned everything and wanted everything to go according to plan--except in his art, which was the only place in his life where he sought the unexpected and wanted accidents to happen. Anyhow, his studio was obviously to his liking. I've been there just once, five or six years ago, when I spent an afternoon with Bill going through all his drawings--I imagine two or three hundred of them. I doubt that more than half a dozen other people have ever been there, and few more knew where it was or even that it existed. (Another memory: someone who knew the Doles early in their years in Santa Barbara, when they lived in a small tract house, recalled Bill working calmly in their living room surrounded but apparently not noticing the noisy swirl of five young children around him.) This studio was the one place in the world, I think, where he could be alone. Even in the increasing isolation of his last years, he cherished it, not simply because it was ideal for him and he'd waited so long for it but because it was his own unique domain. During

his last years, he sometimes seemed to me a lonely man, with his children all gone from home and his health too fragile to permit so active a part in university affairs as in the past. But I suspect he felt lonely only among people; alone in his studio, he was in control, master of his space and his art.

However that may be, in this portion of the interview, he got rid of all self-consciousness. He seemed to have relaxed at home, but now in the studio he becomes expansive and reveals the warmth that made him so endearing a friend. The diffidence with which he showed us his prints at home disappears as he with much good humor drolly explains the collages that have been his principal activity for the last twenty years. We see the sheaves of papers, the shelf of old books, and the two drawers of printed ephemera that are his raw materials. He explains that he tries not to desecrate books by dismantling them but acquires books that have already been vandalized. He wryly speaks of the "secrets" of his art, but that's a joke: he shows us how he colors, cuts, and then assembles--the tweezers with which he handles the scraps of paper "are almost an extension of my hand." He doesn't seem to think about his hands, which are strange, long oblongs with prominent knuckles, the four fingers almost equal in length. But he uses them all the time, with slightly fumbling gestures until he picks up the tweezers, when

suddenly the hands become elegant, organic precision tools. He shows his tools, basically just four: the tweezers, a straightedge, a knife, and a sculptor's modeling tool with a spatula end. And he talks a little about his methods and how he works. I think of a kind of nonverbal crossword puzzle with a clue of an occasional word floating in. He tells us that he works on several collages at a time, that sometimes he gets stuck and it takes a long time to find a solution, that "a little bit goes a long way."

I thought, seven months after his death, that watching the tape for the first time would probably make me cry. It didn't; it is too much like him: modest, gentle, serene, detached, unpretentious, uncomplaining, and incredibly patient. It's ironic that he who was so precise and fastidious as an artist should be recorded so well on a tape that is so imperfect technically. But it does give a good picture of him, his working methods, and his personality--the last emphasizing the irony by giving him more than ample opportunity to demonstrate his legendary patience in gracefully tolerating the ineptitude of the cameraman or director (or both) of the museum episode of the tape. Maybe he gives a message in this too: you have to put up with a lot in life, particularly from other human beings. But you should because they're basically well intentioned. However incompetent and inarticulate they may be, however obscure and

contradictory their motivations and actions, however elusive their thoughts, occasionally a word or something we can understand floats into view reassuringly to tell us to have faith, that underlying it all are well-intended things we can understand, that out of the debris of daily existence, if we work hard enough at the problem and wait long, we'll find that all fits together agreeably.

William Earl Dole, Jr., was born in Angola, Indiana, in 1917, son of a postal worker. He refused a scholarship at the John Herron Art School in Indianapolis to go to Olivet College in Michigan, where he had close contact with Gertrude Stein, Robert Sherwood, and Carl Sandburg, and with George Rickey. He taught in the Angola public schools for a few years, studied at the Chicago Art Institute, and managed to emigrate to California. There he studied with Laszlo Moholy-Nagy at Mills College, married Kathryn Lee Holcomb of an old established San Bernardino family, and served three years in the U.S. Army Air Corps before taking a master's degree at Berkeley in 1947. After teaching two years at Berkeley, he moved to Santa Barbara, where he taught until his death 13 January 1983. When he arrived at Santa Barbara in 1949, the university was still the "College on the Hill." During the following years he saw it move to the present campus and participated in the transformation of the college into a full university. Serving twice as chair of the Art and Art History

Department, he was instrumental in its development from a small service department oriented primarily toward teacher training to a professionally oriented department with full undergraduate and graduate programs. He served also on numerous university committees and through his intelligence, efficiency, and humanity did much to establish the recognition of art as a serious and appropriate university activity.

Only two or three other permanent artist-teachers at any branch of the University of California have achieved his international reputation. He exhibited extensively in the United States and in leading galleries in London, Berlin, Rome, and Mexico City; his work is represented in more than thirty public collections and in countless private collections; he had more than sixty-five one-man shows; he was a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and was awarded an honorary D.F.A. by Olivet College; and he was both Plous Memorial Lecturer (1956) and Faculty Research Lecturer (1982) at UCSB.

He was a great teacher and an incomparable friend. Those of us who knew him intimately recognize him as one of those rare beings of whom it can truthfully be said, "He was irreplaceable."

--Alfred Moir
Professor of History of Art
University of California,
Santa Barbara
29 August 1983

INTERVIEW HISTORY

INTERVIEWER:

Gerald Nordland, Director, Frederick S. Wight Art Galleries, University of California, Los Angeles; A.B., University of Southern California; J.D., University of Southern California Law School.

TIME AND SETTING OF INTERVIEW:

Place: The Santa Barbara Museum of Art; William Dole's home, Santa Barbara; his studio on the campus of the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Dates: December 6, 1975; February 21, 1977 [video session].

Time of day, length of sessions, and total number of recording hours: Interviewing for the first session took place all day on a Saturday, at Dole's home in Santa Barbara. The video session took place during one day. Five hours, 35 minutes of conversation were recorded as he, the interviewer, and the video crew moved through all three locations mentioned above.

Persons present during interview: Nordland and Dole. A crew provided by the University of California, Santa Barbara, operated the video equipment at the video session.

CONDUCT OF THE INTERVIEW:

The interview followed a thematic framework, although each major topic was addressed chronologically. In Tape I, Dole sketches in his family and educational background. He then elaborates on his work at UC Santa Barbara. In Tape II, Dole focuses on the primary influences upon his work, touching on educators, artists who have inspired him, and settings. In Tape III, Dole discusses the mediums in which he works, the development of his style, and his experiences with galleries.

In the video session [Tape IV], Dole elaborates the basic themes made during the earlier interview session. He uses his own works, on display at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, found at his home, and works in progress at his studio to illustrate his points.

EDITING:

Lawrence Weschler, assistant editor, edited the verbatim

transcript, checking it for accuracy and editing for punctuation, paragraphing, spelling, and verification of proper nouns. The final manuscript remains in the same order as the taped material. Words or phrases introduced by the editor have been bracketed.

Dole reviewed and approved the edited transcript. He made few additions or deletions, and he provided or confirmed spellings of names not previously verified.

Final edit review was done by Mitch Tuchman, principal editor. The index was compiled by Cheri Derby, assistant editor. The introduction was written by Alfred Moir, Professor of History of Art, University of California, Santa Barbara. Front matter was prepared by program staff.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS: The original tape recordings, video tape, and edited transcripts of the interview are in the University Archives and are available under the regulations governing the use of noncurrent records of the University.

TAPE NUMBER: I, SIDE ONE

DECEMBER 6, 1975

NORDLAND: Why don't we begin by having you reminisce a bit about your family and childhood and the environment in which you grew up?

DOLE: "I was born in a small town in Indiana" is the way I usually begin this--actually in 1917, on the day of the second battle of the Marne [September 2]. The town was Angola, Indiana, which is in the northeast corner of the state, population of about two thousand. I guess my upbringing was fairly conventional--middle western, middle class. My father [W. Earl Dole] worked in the post office, and my mother [Edna Cowan Dole] had inherited a farm from her father [Elmer Cowan], so that there were these two sources of income that we had to fall back on always. I was the oldest of two children. My brother [Kimsey Cowan Dole] was five years younger than I, so that in a lot of ways I was brought up as an only child.

The ways that I became interested in art are kind of mysterious to me, even now. There was very little art to be seen in a town of that size and place. But when I started school--which I very much wanted to do; from the time I was about three years old on, I could hardly wait to get started-- There was a very good art teacher [Florence Parsell] who came to our room once

a week, and I was fascinated by the projects which she set for us. As nearly as I can remember, I made up my mind when I was in the first grade to be an artist. Possibly not on my own. I think somebody said, "You'd make a great artist," and that always stuck with me. I was pretty good in school, and I went rapidly through grade school. I skipped half of the second grade and half of the fifth grade and half of the eighth grade and ended up in high school at the age of twelve, I think. [laughter] In high school, it turned out, I had another art teacher [Wilma Ale] who was also extremely good and very encouraging to me. I had gotten, in the meanwhile--I think on my own--very seriously interested in art. I think I was only eleven or twelve when I sent to Sears and Roebuck for a set of oil paints, which were actually a box of twelve little tubes about an inch long with colors like mauve and Harrison red and so on. There were a couple brushes and a tiny bottle of turpentine and a tiny bottle of pale drying oil. I also had ordered six academy boards, nine by six inches. I made a palette out of the top of a cigar box and glued a metal bottle cap on it for an oil cup because I'd seen pictures of all this in some old magazines somewhere. My first painting was the head of a German shepherd dog, in profile against a mauve background, pure mauve. [laughter] My dabbling in oil

paints went on for several years. Someone told me that window shades made awfully good things to paint on, old window shades, because they were cloth and they were already sized. But I never had too much success against that dismal green color that all window shades were in those days. At any rate, I was greatly encouraged to try other media by my art teacher in high school, and I took as many art courses as I could in high school.

The teacher, who had been a student at John Herron Art Institute, promoted [me], and I got a scholarship to go to John Herron when I finished high school. At the same time, though, I had visited Olivet College on one of those promotional things that colleges did; and I was visited by representatives from the college who said that they would match my scholarship at John Herron. So I had this choice to make. I chose finally to go to college instead of going to art school, which I now think was a good idea, in spite of the fact that when I got to college, I discovered that there was only one art teacher there; and her best years had past, I think is the kindest way of referring to it. So, after taking a few courses my first year, I changed to English literature as my major because it was expected that there would be new teachers in art coming along and meanwhile I had had a very heavy interest in literature all these years. I had done a lot of reading and even aspired at

various times to writing, which I never got around to doing. But at any rate, I did major in English lit. for most of my first three years in college. Finally, George Rickey came to the college as artist in residence and was really the first serious artist that I worked with. The [Andrew] Carnegie Foundation had sent him there to paint a mural in fresco, and I worked more as his apprentice and assistant than in any kind of class situation. I did plastering and underpainting and a lot of the documentary drawing that went into the final design of the mural; I spent over a year working with him on this. At about the same time, Harris King Prior came out to teach art history. My degree actually is in art history.

NORDLAND: Your Olivet degree?

DOLE: Yes. Shall I go on?

NORDLAND: Sure. That's good.

DOLE: Well, following graduation, I had a job promised with the Lakeside Press in Chicago and was very pleased with this, except that there was a recession and the job didn't materialize. After a quick trip to New York with letters of introduction to everybody from Carl Van Vechten to Julian Levy, and having no success, I went back to college after Christmas to get my teaching credential. My idea was to get a teaching credential in English and keep my art separate from my teaching.

But when it came to doing practice teaching, it was learned that I had majored in art, and since they had no art teacher, I was forced to do my practice teaching in art. I discovered after only one day that I loved it. Working in art with young children particularly is very rewarding and very pleasant. I could see how trying to teach grammar would be a real drag in comparison, so I ended up being an art teacher. I went that summer to the Art Institute in Chicago and took a crash course in methods of art education and also a very interesting course in figure drawing with an artist named Kenneth Schopen--I've never heard anything about him since. Then I got a job teaching, curiously enough, in my own hometown.

NORDLAND: Remarkable.

DOLE: Eleven hundred dollars a year, beginning salary. [laughter]

NORDLAND: What year was that?

DOLE: It was 1939. I taught there for three years. Being close to Olivet College, I spent a lot of my weekends up there and kept my intellectual interests alive. There was a sculptor in residence named Milton Horn, who now lives in Chicago, and I worked--well, I guess it was later--I worked one summer as his assistant.

But in the summer of 1940, I came out to Mills College for the summer session, when [Laszlo] Moholy-Nagy

and his faculty from the then Institute of Design in Chicago were in residence. That was a very exciting and rewarding experience I think. Particularly Moholy-Nagy himself. And also Gyorgy Kepes was really a very, very good teacher. And that was where I met my wife [Kathryn Holcomb], that summer.

NORDLAND: Then it was getting to be wartime.

DOLE: Then it was getting to be wartime, yes. And it was getting to be married time. I went into the army in '42, the spring of '42, and I was in the army for three and a half years.

NORDLAND: What year did you get married?

DOLE: In '41 I think it was.

NORDLAND: Did you go back home to get married?

DOLE: Yes. It was a kind of mixed-up thing because Kate was still in school and out of school, one way and another, following me around, and it got very complicated. By accident, I was in the air corps, and I was trained as a radio mechanic, although I could never decide whether electricity flowed from positive to negative or negative to positive. And not being able to make that decision in my own mind, I never could learn anything else about radio either. [laughter]

NORDLAND: But they called you a radio operator?

DOLE: No, mechanic, radio mechanic. That was my official

designation. I was shipped off to Alaska as a radio mechanic. But I quickly got a job there as a--two jobs: one as a weather clerk, posting weather information in the information center, and one as the squadron artist. I had a tent as my studio, which was so dark I never even went in it, much less used it. [laughter] But I had some nice materials to work with, in exchange for occasionally doing a poster for the day room and that sort of thing.

But then they changed the requirements for vision for cadet training, and I applied for cadet training. I was accepted in Alaska and got shipped back. Kate was then living in Riverside--her family, you know, is from San Bernardino. I was sent first to Camp Hahn, which is approximately six miles from Riverside, which I thought was zeroing in pretty close [laughter], lucking out in the army in a way that very rarely happens. But then I caught cold and lost the few pounds edge I had on the minimum weight thing, and I was washed out before I ever got started in cadet training. Then began a long migration that we made-- That was in Denver. Kate came out to Denver, and we went from Denver to Fresno, to someplace. Oh, on the way to San Francisco, Billy got chicken pox, and we had a nice emergency layover there. I finally ended up in Spokane, in aviation engineers, in demolition school, of

all things. [laughter]

But then I got mononucleosis, which they thought was rheumatic fever, and they put me in the air force convalescent hospital there. While I was still a patient, I ingratiated myself in the program as an artist and finally got transferred there as an instructor in drawing and painting, which is how I spent my last year in the army. And it was probably the most rewarding-- It was one of the really strong, developing periods in my development. I didn't have to do anything if I didn't have any students to work with, and there were long periods of time when I didn't have any students to work with. I had a big studio and all the materials I wanted, and I could do my own work.

NORDLAND: What happened? You say it was a period of development. What kind of development?

DOLE: Well, it was the first time that I had, you know, really complete freedom to work on my own. Teaching in public schools is such a murderous routine that you just don't have much left over to do your own work. Being on KP in the army normally isn't a very good way either. I had this real freedom. At the same time, I was developing a lot of interests, more serious interests somehow, in technical matters and all sorts of-- Well, for example, I was permitted to go into town one day a week, or half a day a week, maybe, to do whatever research I wanted to

do. I spent my time reading the art journals--you remember, Magazine of Art at that time was a very good magazine--and looking into a lot of books that I hadn't-- One book that I found at that time was Erle Loran's book on Cézanne [Cézanne's Composition], which was pretty important in my development at that time. Also, Glen Wessels was teaching at Eastern Washington State and doing an extension course, which I enrolled in, and that was very important to me too.

Then I finally got out of the army. By that time we had three children, and I took a job with an advertising agency in a kind of training program that was supported by the Veterans Administration jointly with this company.

NORDLAND: What city?

DOLE: In Spokane. Virgil A. Warren Advertising. Virgil was a big wheel in Lions International. [laughter] After about three months of that, possibly a little more, it became pretty evident that I wasn't going to cut the mustard as a commercial artist because I wasn't temperamentally adjusted to it. I'd be given a project to do, and I would have in my mind a beautiful solution to this. So, I would go to work on it and get it just right, and then on a cost basis they would figure out that my earnings for this was fifteen cents, or something of that sort. And I'd spent three hours on it. My weekly checks were beginning to get smaller and smaller, coming to sometimes-- I

think thirteen dollars was the point where I decided that I was wasting my time in that field.

So, I began applying around to various places to go to school, to get a graduate degree on the GI Bill. I applied to the School of Architecture at Harvard and was accepted there with a personal letter from [Walter] Gropius. It was apparently on the basis of my study with Moholy-Nagy that the thing was granted because there was nothing in my academic background that would prepare me. But one way and another, we finally decided that-- Oh, I was also offered a job by George Rickey to go back and teach at Muhlenberg College, where he was then teaching. But we finally decided that I would go to Berkeley and get my M.A. Glen Wessels was going back there to teach, and he sort of encouraged me to do this. And Kate being a native Californian, going back to California seemed like a good idea.

NORDLAND: Loran was there too.

DOLE: And Erle was there, and it was actually Erle who approved my admission after seeing some of the watercolors that I had done when I was in Spokane. (At that time I had wanted to be the world's greatest watercolorist; that was my real major interest in painting.) Then I entered graduate school at Berkeley in the summer of '46, and by just concentrating very hard, I finished the degree in the

spring of '47. It was a very good experience, I think, for me because I had the opportunity of working with more people than I had ever worked with in all the rest of my previous training. I was particularly grateful to have the opportunity to work with Margaret Peterson O'Hagen and with [Chiura] Obata, as well as doing a lot of work with Loran and Wessels and John Haley. I guess those were the only ones I worked with very much. Oh, I also got to know Neuhaus very well, but mostly drinking coffee with him in the afternoons.

NORDLAND: I don't know Neuhaus.

DOLE: I guess he was before you were there. He goes way, way back in Berkeley history. One of the first people to teach art there. Eugen Neuhaus. He's from Munich. He was the person who translated [Max] Dörner's Materials of the Artist, you know.

NORDLAND: Oh, the translator of Dörner. My goodness, that would take care of him for life, wouldn't it?

DOLE: It did. He was able to live the life of the real traditional professor--gourmet cook, all the rest.

NORDLAND: Well, tell me more about your years there. Now, up to that point you'd had the grammar school teacher, you had the high school teacher, you hadn't had much of all of that except that when Rickey came.

DOLE: Rickey came: that was the real beginning.

NORDLAND: You'd had Wessels in the army. Talk about these people. What kind of example or what kind of inspiration-- What did they do for you?

DOLE: Well, an example of what they did, I suppose, among other things: Rickey gave a series of lectures, that were open to everybody, in which he talked about the elements of drawing and painting, as I recall. He'd been a student of Andre Lhôte--I don't know if you knew that; you probably knew that. I took very copious notes on this; that must have been in 1937, say. Well, then, ten years later, when I was a graduate student at Berkeley and thought that I had learned so much from Loran about drawing and composition and so on, I happened to run across these notes and discovered that they were exactly what I had just relearned ten years later, which, you know, demonstrates the notion that you can only learn what is relevant to your experience. I hadn't had the experience at the time that I learned this from Rickey. What I did learn, I think, in all these procedures were a kind of precocious (but not very good) facility at drawing and a certain amount of technical skill in painting. But I really hadn't had all that much of the kind of hard day-after-day-after-day work that one would get in an art school, for example. It was all very flashy, off-the-top-of-the-head kind of performance. I

was really a very late bloomer as an artist. In spite of these teachers, I was largely self-taught.

NORDLAND: If you hadn't run into Wessels up in Washington, would you still have gone to Cal, do you think?

DOLE: I think very likely I would have because Kate had gone to Mills and two of her brothers had gone to Cal, and she was very familiar with Berkeley and the whole scene there. And the art department there had a very good reputation at that time. They talk about the Berkeley school, you know, of painting and all. All of those things together: probably I would have gone there anyway.

NORDLAND: But you had thought about architecture.

DOLE: Yes, I had this idea off and on over a long period of time actually. Strangely enough, one of the things that discouraged me from pursuing it was reading, when I was in Spokane, that book of William Lescaze, On Architecture, in which he pointed out the fact that the architect is always working for a client. It occurred to me that it would be very much like my experience with the advertising agency, and I wanted a little more independence than that. I had one other alternative, and that was to go back to my teaching job in Indiana, which didn't appeal to me at all.

Well, then good fortune smiled on me as soon as I finished my degree. Stephen Pepper offered me what was

a marvelous opportunity: that was, to stay on as a lecturer in the art department and teach the introductory drawing course for two years. It was a terminal kind of situation and well understood on everybody's part, but it gave me the opportunity of getting teaching experience at that level under people that I knew and respected very highly and with a kind of protective guidance and an opportunity to do a lot of work on my own too. So, I stayed there two more years as a lecturer. And because I still had a little left over on my GI Bill, I was able also to take a few more courses in the psychology of perception, for example.

NORDLAND: Was [Rudolf] Arnheim there?

DOLE: No.

NORDLAND: He was there at one time, and the University of California did publish his book.

DOLE: Yes, I think it was after I was there though. I took this course with a psychologist named [Egon] Brunswick, who has passed on long since.

While I was there, I began to exhibit a little bit. One of my first exhibitions was some sort of a juried exhibition at the Oakland Museum [1946]. Then I was accepted in a national show that the [California Palace of the] Legion of Honor put on [1947]. I can't remember what it was called at that time; it was a

survey of painting [Second Annual Exhibition of Paintings]. Those are the exhibitions I remember most clearly.

NORDLAND: So, you completed your M.A. in '47, in one spring, and then in '47-'48 and '48-'49 you were a lecturer. So, it was during that period that you began to exhibit seriously for the first time?

DOLE: Or tried to. Well, during the second year that I was a lecturer, since it was understood that I would have to find a job elsewhere, I began sending out applications. In those days we didn't have a Xerox to make a hundred copies of these, and I didn't even have a typewriter; so I had to write all my letters of application by hand. I made a very select list of about twenty-four colleges and universities where I thought I might like to teach and sent those out. Only three of these places eventually responded favorably, and as it turned out, the only one that came through was Santa Barbara, where I have been ever since. And I must say, it's been a very good place to be. [laughter]

NORDLAND: Driving around today, reaching this place, made me feel that at least from my point of view--of course, it is something of a holiday--that the pressures seem to be somewhat less here than they are in San Francisco or Los Angeles.

DOLE: Very true.

NORDLAND: What was the college like when you came here?

DOLE: The university had taken over this campus in 1946, and it had previously been a state teachers college or a state college and before that a state normal school with an emphasis on training teachers in industrial arts and home economics and elementary education. The art department had been geared to that service responsibility. But when the university took over, they tried very rapidly to upgrade the institution, to change the image. Among the other edicts that came down was that no one could hope to continue with tenure who didn't have a doctorate degree. It didn't matter whether it was an Ed.D. or whatever kind of degree as long as it said "Doctor." There was a great rush on the part of faculty to begin work on doctoral programs, mostly in Ed.D.s, in education. Oregon State was a very popular place to rush off to. Well, I decided very early that either I was going to make it with my master's degree or I wasn't, but I wasn't going to go this route, which I didn't do. As it turned out, I was one of the first two to be promoted to tenure without a doctorate on this campus.

Well, anyway, the art department had begun to evolve from a program that was very heavy in crafts-- There were courses in weaving and ceramics and basketmaking and leather tooling and artistic needlework and toy making, if you can believe it, as well as lettering and photography

and drawing and painting and methods of art education for the elementary school and for the secondary school and a survey course in art history, I believe. Most of the faculty were people who had been trained in the art education field. Some of them had had experience as teachers in that area. There was one Ph.D. in the department who preceded me by one year; this was Elliott Evans, who's been at that Society of California Pioneers Museum [in San Francisco] ever since he left here. His Ph.D. is in history and not in art history. But that didn't matter, because he was a proper "Doctor." He became chairman the second year I was here and was chairman for five years. He was very influential in developing this department in the right--and strengthening it a great deal.

My initial appointment was as an instructor. It was kind of a two-year appointment to serve as a sabbatical replacement. None of the regular faculty members had ever had, previous to my coming, a sabbatical; so they were lined up for their turns at this, and I had to replace each successive one with a rather wide variety of courses. [laughter] In my first two or three years, I taught thirteen different courses: drawing, painting, printmaking, ceramics, both of the art education courses, the art appreciation. God knows what else.

NORDLAND: That's seven.

DOLE: Well, the beginning and advanced in all of these. [laughter]

NORDLAND: Well, that's fourteen.

DOLE: That's fourteen, right. We taught four studio courses a week in those days, six-hour courses each. So, we spent four full days--long, hard days--in the classroom. Which meant that one's own creative activity and research was done nights and weekends.

I launched into this very ambitious program of submitting work to every possible exhibition that was available or open to me. My idea, which worked, was to build up as rapidly as possible a long exhibitions record to present as evidence of research in place of the doctorate degree or publication. As a result of that, and because there were at that time a lot of exhibitions available to painters, there were many opportunities, and I got together a pretty long list.

TAPE NUMBER: I, SIDE TWO

DECEMBER 6, 1975

NORDLAND: We're discussing your experiences at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and the twenty-seven or twenty-eight years that you've been here. I'd like to have you talk about how the department has changed and grown, your memories of it.

DOLE: Since this goes back twenty-seven-odd years, it's a rather long story, I suppose, but I'll try to touch the points that seem of importance to me. The department, when I came here, was largely directed to courses for people who planned to be public school art teachers, or service courses for people who were going to teach in the elementary schools as elementary teachers, or for home economics teachers. As a result, there was this emphasis on crafts, and the courses in drawing and painting were more directed to the kinds of techniques that would be used in the schools. The students had to make things like color wheels, and they did all of these projects in perspective that could be taught to eighth-grade students, that kind of thing. Art history was purely a very casual survey kind of thing. But by the time I came here, there was serious consideration given to going into more depth in painting and sculpture and [so on]. I took over a course which had to do with printing on textiles--I forget what it was called.

Out of that I made the first printmaking class.

NORDLAND: It was block printing on textiles?

DOLE: Yes, block printing on textiles, and I think they'd gotten a little bit into experimenting with silk-screening on textiles. Anyway, I introduced intaglio printing and a more serious use of silk screen within the limitations of the facilities. The weaving program--after a couple years here, the woman who taught it made a survey of all the high schools in California to discover what courses were indeed taught in high schools, or what activities of that sort, and discovering that weaving was only taught in a couple high schools, she resigned her position. [laughter] It was only a part-time position anyway. But on the basis of this survey and other studies, we began to divest ourselves of some of the courses. Lettering, I think, wasn't offered after the second year I'd been here. Leather work had never been taught since I'd been here. We continued photography. And ceramics was quite a strong program even then. It was taught by Jacob Lindberg-Hansen, who'd been trained in the Royal Academy in Denmark and was really a very accomplished person technically.

From the time I came here until 1954, the university was on the Riviera campus, which was in Santa Barbara, up on the hill. The original plan had been to move the campus after the university took over to another campus which was

down near the beach, called the Mesa campus, where [Santa Barbara] City College presently is located. But between the university taking over and the time I came here, the present campus had been offered to the university by the government. It had been a marine air station during World War II. The federal government sold it for a dollar, or something like that, to the university--four hundred and some-odd acres--

NORDLAND: Fantastic.

DOLE: Which made it then the biggest campus in the whole system. I believe Irvine is bigger now and probably also Santa Cruz. But the stories that came through to Berkeley about this dream campus, with all of these stone officers' quarters that were going to be turned over to the faculty to live in and this idyllic beach setting, made it sound like a terribly attractive place to come to. The officers' quarters we never were able to find here, and it was, of course, five years before we did finally move out here, and then under rather primitive circumstances.

The art library, when I came here, consisted of maybe a couple hundred books, it seems to me, most of which had to do with topics like--one of my favorite books--How To Design Period Furniture. [laughter] And the usual old editions of Helen Gardner and that kind of thing. But the acquisitions librarian at that time [Hobart Berelsheimer]

was a terribly understanding, very conscientious man totally devoted to building the library, and he established a policy of being extraordinarily generous with the guidelines for acquisitions in art books, a policy which has continued until today, which is why we have a really good art library. One of my first responsibilities was being the departmental liaison with the library, so I was very closely involved with that early development.

Well, anyway, when I first came here, the enrollment was fairly large, around 2,400, I think, because of the GI Bill. But by the time we moved to this new campus, the enrollment had dropped to around 1,500, I think, as the GI Bill was working out. The prediction was that nobody wants to go out there and live in that mudhole, that slough, that the place "is going to fold up; it'll never go." Well, now that we have 14,500 students, this theory has been refuted. The original plan for this campus was to limit the enrollment to 2,500, to have only undergraduate instruction, and to develop a liberal arts college which would be the equivalent of distinguished, small, liberal arts colleges in the East, like Swarthmore. By the time we actually moved here, the figure'd been moved up to 3,500. The art building had been in the planning stage since before we moved to this campus and had been predicated, originally, on a 2,500 maximum enrollment, which would

anticipate, at the most, something like eighty majors. The original buildings that we moved into on this campus were three of the two-story barracks-type buildings. We converted the bottom floor of one of those into an art gallery, which was really quite a handsome thing, with cork floors; the walls were covered with plywood, which was covered with cloth, and we had very good lighting, and it made a very satisfactory gallery situation. The space that we had was in some ways more flexible and usable than our present space, although we didn't have quite as many studios.

The first art historian with a proper Ph.D. was hired around 1953; Mario Del Chiaro was the first one. No, it was after we came to this campus, so it must have been '55. Then I left on sabbatical the following year and went to Florence and stayed for two years actually.

NORDLAND: How did you arrange a two-year sabbatical?

DOLE: I took the second year as a leave of absence, without salary--used up a nest egg that had been earmarked for buying a house. When I came back, the present art building was pretty well under construction. Ground had been broken; the plans were all jelled and everything. I was dismayed at the way the plans had developed from our years of very careful planning and so on, which is another story altogether. But the department was slowly growing, but really rather slowly growing. Howard Warshaw came as my replacement

while I was on sabbatical, and then stayed on as a regular appointee. Shortly after I came back--

NORDLAND: When? In '55-'56?

DOLE: In '55-'56, '56-'57, yes. Then I became chairman of the department in 1958 and was chairman for five years. And my second year of the chairmanship, we moved into the new building. I think it was at that time that I hired a second ceramics instructor, Jiggs [Conway] Pierson. We hired a printmaker. We made several attempts to enlarge art history, but we didn't make a regular appointment until Alfred Moir came, more or less specifically to be my replacement as chairman (but he came a year before I finished my five-year tour).

Well, first of all, shortly after we moved into the new building, the regents declared this to be no longer a limited-enrollment campus; it was to become a general campus and to develop an enrollment as large as Berkeley or UCLA. At the same time, they ended the program in industrial arts, with which we shared space in this building. In fact, industrial arts had two-thirds of the original space. So after [that] program was phased out, which would take four years, we were going to get a tremendous amount of space and be able to expand. Well, as it turned out, by the time industrial arts phased out, a wholly developed college of engineering was brought in, with a complete faculty,

already intact, brought in from Yale. They went into the space that we were to occupy, vacated by industrial arts. The art department has lived in continual hope of getting more space in that building, and we've gotten a little bit, but a very little bit. Now that a new engineering building is built, electrical and mechanical engineering moved out, but their space was filled by the expansion of chemical and nuclear engineering. Now chemical is moving out, I believe, but the nuclear people are expanding into that space. We never seem to get the space.

NORDLAND: How large is your faculty now?

DOLE: We now have around twenty-eight FTE [full-time equivalent] faculty positions. I think there were nine or ten when I first came here. But the big expansion happened after my chairmanship, which terminated in '63. At that time, Alfred Moir took over as chairman, and this was the time when enrollment began to expand very rapidly here. We began to get a great number of additional positions and increases in the budget. I think one year we got as many as five new positions. The whole art history program developed from that time on. In addition to Del Chiaro, who is an antique man, we hired a medievalist, a Renaissance person, an Orientalist, first one nineteenth-century person and then another, and so on. I think there are now eleven art historians, all Ph.D.s, and the rest

of the people are in studio. But we expanded ceramics, for example, to three people, and printmaking to two, and sculpture to two, and the rest of them are all painters.

NORDLAND: Who double in drawing?

DOLE: Yes. Well, we had one person who taught photography also, as well as painting and drawing, but the demands in enrollment have made it impossible for him to--

Well, to continue this chairmanship thing: Alfred was chairman for six years and then Mario Del Chiaro was chairman for two years, and then I took up responsibility again for three more years, from '71 to '74. And it was during this time that, although the campus enrollment was dropping, enrollment of majors in the art department was expanding at a phenomenal rate. I don't have at hand the statistics, but in the studio area I think the majors more than doubled within those three years.

NORDLAND: When was the period of the Isla Vista riots?

DOLE: That was in--what?--'69, '70, '71, around there. And I think, as a department, we had rather less trouble than most or a lot of departments. Our students somehow didn't seem to be as actively involved; and although we established workshops for students to do posters and so on, after the first week of activity, no one seemed to be very much interested in making posters in that situation.

NORDLAND: I remember now that the time that I had made

the big loan to you from the San Francisco Museum [of Art] was when it happened, which was somewhat scary to me. That was '70.

DOLE: Yes. There was some minor vandalism around the department, but not anything extensive. Only one of our faculty members [David Kunzle] was very much involved; he's no longer with us.

NORDLAND: Are there any particular faculty people, either in history or studio, that have played special roles in the development of the department?

DOLE: Well, I think probably because of being in charge during the period of greatest expansion, and because, I think, of all the people in the department he has a greater interest in both art history and studio, Alfred Moir had a great responsibility for its development. There is presently a growing interest on the part of the art historians to secede from the studio area and form a separate department, which is a notion that is rigidly opposed by this administration.

NORDLAND: You mean the chancellor?

DOLE: Yes, and the vice-chancellor.

NORDLAND: Does that include also the faculty in studio?

DOLE: The studio faculty, I think, are not actively engaged in trying to keep the art historians with them, but I don't know of any person in the studio area who, at

the same time, is actively agitating for separation from the art historians. On the other hand, I think Alfred is almost the only historian who doesn't want to break off and form a separate department. Historically, as you know, the development of art departments in the West, west of the Mississippi, has always been, first, the studio area and, then, art history develops out of that later, whereas nearly all of our art historians have an eastern background, where the horse came before the cart or the other way around. [laughter]

NORDLAND: Well, even at Berkeley, the authenticity of a studio program has been challenged, the feeling being that art is not really a discipline and it's not really something that can be measured or adequately studied. But art history is a discipline, and it can be studied, and it can be measured, and therefore it's a proper subject for a university degree and a university department.

DOLE: The argument for studio though is that it's one of the rare disciplines which can produce the subject of its own investigation. Pure history isn't able. It's maybe not a very good argument, but it's an interesting one. [laughter]

NORDLAND: Has there been a lot of coming and going, a lot of turnover among your personnel?

DOLE: Actually there hasn't been a great deal of turnover.

In the studio area in my time, apart from people who have retired-- Renzo Fenci, the sculptor, left to go to Otis, where he's been ever since it was originally founded as the Los Angeles Art Institute. Thomas Cornell left to go to Bowdoin College, Don Lent left to go to Bates College, and Thomas Bang left to go to SUNY [State University of New York] at--

NORDLAND: Cooperstown?

DOLE: Yes. Of art historians, within my chairmanship, I had to let one go, two go, because of inadequate evidence of publication and research, and a third more recently was given a terminal appointment for that reason. We lost a medievalist for similar reasons, two medievalists, but not during my chairmanships. But that's a pretty modest record of turnover.

NORDLAND: In so large a department.

DOLE: There have been people who've been on temporary appointments, acting assistant professors, associates, and acting instructors, and so on. But of regular ladder appointments, that's kind of remarkable.

NORDLAND: Well, maybe you could talk a little bit about the history of the art gallery here at UCSB: where it's been and where it's going and how long its building has been available.

DOLE: The original activity in the way of exhibitions was

on the old campus, where there were maybe eight or ten glassed overcases, which could only be reached by a real gymnastic effort because they were all located over stairwells that went into the basement areas. These were used to display student work, and changing these exhibitions was the responsibility of a small committee, of which I, as the newest faculty member, was usually the responsible person. We had a kind of hallway that led to the upstairs area which was used for student exhibition, but I seem to remember a couple small exhibitions of some kind that were done in there. I have no idea what they were anymore. Then, when we first moved to the new campus, we had the downstairs of one of these barracks, which I mentioned before, and we borrowed some exhibitions of drawings, for example, from the Santa Barbara Museum. We had an exhibition of the work of Donald Bear, who, of course, by that time had died. I had a one-man show there one summer I recall. We showed a lot of student work. The whole program was very casual. There probably was a committee responsible for it, but the whole department sort of worked on the thing.

Then, after we moved to the new building, we had planned for an exhibition gallery space. And the first battle that we had to solve was that the industrial arts people, since it was in this building that we shared

jointly, had the idea that it was also their exhibition space. They wanted to show the history of transportation, you know, the development of the bicycle and all that sort of thing, industrial design, and so on. Somehow, we initially won that battle to make this purely space for an art gallery. In addition to being chairman when we moved to the new building, I also assumed the position of acting director of the art gallery, which position I maintained for two years until David Gebhard was appointed specifically to be director of the gallery as well as teaching.

NORDLAND: He was professor of architectural history?

DOLE: Yes, architectural history. The first exhibition that we had in the gallery was the Max Beckmann paintings that belonged to Stephan Lackner, which he very graciously loaned to us; and I must say, it was a spectacular exhibition.

NORDLAND: What year would that have been?

DOLE: That must have been-- I have the catalog for it. I think it was probably in the late fall of '59 or early winter of '60 [September 16-October 6, 1959]. I remember it was raining the day that we moved the things from his house to the campus in a couple station wagons, and we discovered that to have them under cover all the way from the car to the gallery meant unloading them down in the engineering department's loading room and taking them up

in the elevator, and then a roundabout way through all the covered passages, because this building was designed for-- Well, for example, on a rainy day, you can't go to the men's room unless you have an umbrella if you're in the south end of the building because they're all upstairs and the stairs have no roof over 'em. We had a similar problem. Anyway, that great self-portrait of Beckmann's, you know, with the hunting horn, we had positioned opposite the glass front (the front doors were then glass), and just as the hour of opening the exhibition came, the sun was quite low in the west there, and it shone through those doors and just picked out the marvelous orange shirt and the brass horn. It was, you know, like almost a biblical, triumphant thing. That must have been early fall when we did that, because Ala Story assisted with a Christmas show that we did which followed that. She laid the groundwork for making the loans from a number of dealers in Los Angeles and from private collectors. We borrowed Margaret Mallory's baroque angels and hung them from the ceiling. And that huge wooden thing of Wright Ludington's of one of the saints. And some marvelous Neapolitan crèche figures from a woman. And what was the name of that dealer in Los Angeles? Adolph Loewi. He loaned us some really beautiful things. And there was a very old dealer here in town, now dead [A. Falvy]; he was no longer

actively dealing, but he had some great things that he loaned us. And that was such a beautiful show. Then we showed [Rico] Lebrun's cartoons for the Scripps College murals, one of the early shows. And we showed-- Well, we actually showed Esther Bear's private collection, which in a roundabout way led to her establishing her own gallery because the walls were bare and she needed something-- I mean [this show] went to several museums. But the whole gallery operation was done without any additional clerical help either or staff. The hanging was done by a faculty committee. I had only one and a half people in the office staff for the department, and they doubled up and did all of the additional gallery work too.

NORDLAND: Clerical work and catalog preparation.

DOLE: Correspondence and so on. Well, in 1960, we acquired the Sedgwick collection, and from that time on we began to develop a budget for supporting the exhibitions program, creating separate staff, and so on.

NORDLAND: Are you actively collecting?

DOLE: No.

NORDLAND: Was that a policy decision?

DOLE: It's hard to know what it is. This all comes by gift, as you know, and the Art Affiliates have been very helpful from time to time in this.

NORDLAND: Did they sponsor one show per year?

DOLE: They've now established a program doing that, but they didn't have a regular program for doing that. They didn't really even have a specific acquisitions program. Most of their acquisitions recently have been directed toward the Ala Story Print Collection, which is a separate thing, you know, which Ala herself started with her purchases from the--what is it?--the Achenbach collection in San Francisco, you know. When Gunther Troche began weeding that out, he gave her first choice of a lot of duplicate materials, and she bought maybe fifty prints from him--beautiful Hans Burkmeyers--really nice stuff. And that is the basis of the Ala Story Print Collection. But the example of the Sedgwick collection has never borne fruit as far as being bait to attract large gifts.

NORDLAND: Do you find it useful to have a gallery devoted 100 percent of the time to the Sedgwick holdings?

DOLE: I don't personally. I don't find the material that interesting.

NORDLAND: Is it used that much by the faculty for study purposes?

DOLE: The faculty, I think, has not developed the kind of interest in it that one would hope they had, either for their own research or as teaching material.

NORDLAND: One of the problems, I think, of art history teaching is that it's often more convenient to deal with

slides of familiar things, with a rich literature, rather than to deal with real works of art which are seen and understood, examined personally, but that do not necessarily have that rich literature connected with them.

DOLE: I think there are a lot of very interesting art historical problems there, but there are probably other more interesting ones that they'd rather get involved with. On the other hand, the [Sigmond] Morgenroth collection of medals has been used by graduate students for a number of papers, much more widely used.

NORDLAND: I saw today that there were students working on classical material, undoubtedly assigned by Del Chiaro.

DOLE: Yes.

NORDLAND: There was also a couple of kids that were working on a baroque painting.

DOLE: I think that baroque painting is from Alfred Moir's own collection, and he's occasionally made available these things for classes.

TAPE NUMBER: II, SIDE ONE

DECEMBER 6, 1975

DOLE: The thing I'd like to talk about now is what the resources in a small midwestern town were for the inspiration and information of somebody who was interested in art. If it's true, as I believe it is, that art begets art, I can't for the life of me figure out what art it was that gave me the notion of being interested in art or being an artist or of creating works of art, except that somewhere something struck a chord. It must have been pictures I saw in magazines because there certainly were no original works of art that I could see, and--I'll get to this a little later--I don't really think I saw an original painting of any consequence at all until I went to the World's Fair in Chicago in 1933, when I was fifteen years old.

One of the most vivid memories I have--and I already must have had a very strong interest in art by that time--was discovering, in the attic of a cottage at Lake James that we acquired and where we spent a number of summers, a pile of old women's magazines. The ones I remember best were Ladies' Home Journal, which must have been published around 1900, or possibly even earlier. They were very lavishly produced magazines, I recall, and in each one there was a center section, a kind of portfolio of drawings

that were reproduced in sepia; apparently a lot of the drawings were done in red chalk or red conté crayon, and they were reproduced in those colors. There were some landscapes that were done in traditional, Barbizon school style of drawing, and there were a number of figure drawings. I'm sure that among them must have been a lot of drawings of Edward Burne-Jones. I don't specifically remember the drawings, but I do remember that name, which always stuck in my mind. I must have been eleven or twelve years old at the time I ran into these, but the elegance of these drawings and the enormous finish that was characteristic of all of them was very impressive to me.

At the same time, in various places, I was acquiring information about what kinds of equipment and tools and materials and so on artists used. It was very much like--and I'd gone through this earlier--how a kid who's hooked on baseball'll cut out all kinds of things from newspapers, everything that has to do with baseball: I was continually looking for things that had to do with artists. I recall that somewhere I saw a picture of the kind of crayon holder that was used in the nineteenth century and discovered that I could get one of these from Sears and Roebuck too. So I got one of these brass crayon holders and some black conté crayons and white conté crayons and five hundred sheets of gray manila paper, also nine by six inches, like my academy boards for oil painting. But somehow,

in the pictures I had of artists with a crayon holder, I didn't get the idea that you had to sharpen the crayons, and it was a terribly crude drawing tool to use on sheets of paper only nine by six inches. [laughter] I really never liked the work that I did with them, but I felt obligated to carry on the tradition with this material. Apart from magazines, which-- Well, that was the age, in the twenties and early thirties, when magazines were rather lavishly illustrated; and illustrators like McClelland Barclay and John La Gatta and that man who did the Arrow Collar things were very impressive to me.

I also had the resources of the public library, which was one of those Carnegie public libraries. The total resources in the art section were very slim. There were, I'm sure, not more than a dozen books altogether on art. In addition to the inevitable Helen Gardner--in one of the very early editions; those little tiny, smudgy black illustrations--there was a book with the baffling title of How To Judge a Picture, which I never read because I couldn't understand what the title meant. There was a book, one of the standard histories of sculpture I believe, and a book that really was most impressive to me, a book by a writer named F. Hopkinson Smith called Outdoor Sketching. Smith was, I think, a professional writer, a novelist probably, but an avid amateur painter; and the

book Outdoor Sketching was a kind of series of reminiscences of his own experiences drawing and painting out of doors. I think there was another book of his called Under the White Umbrella which was a similar series of reminiscences. (The white umbrella, of course, is the traditional white umbrella that, when one painted out of doors, one put over the easel to protect it from the direct rays of the sun.) But these were beautifully inspirational books for me because they talked about real artists working with real artists' materials. The whole romantic basis of the Munich school of still lifes, with the light shining from old copper pots and brass candlesticks and crumpled velvet, that sort of thing, created a whole kind of aesthetic for me that was very vivid.

In high school, though, I did learn from my art teachers a lot more about the history of art. I suppose a lot of my romantic illusions were corrected in that time, so that I probably was quite a bit more knowledgeable than I recall now.

When I finally did get to Chicago to see that tremendous loan exhibition at the Art Institute which filled all the galleries in the place-- I remember my mother went with me to this exhibition. We went rather early in the morning, and I made her, poor thing, go around with me. We just barely got through the last gallery by the time they

closed at five or six o'clock in the evening. She was terribly exhausted, of course, but I was so stimulated by this--I couldn't believe my-- Well, just eating up the pictures in one gallery and going into another huge gallery and discovering another whole room full of paintings, real hand-painted oils: it was just a staggering experience. But the curious thing is, I can only remember a few of the actual paintings. I haven't looked recently into the catalog, which I still have, to discover what it was I did see. But last year, or about a year and a half ago, I was at the Smith College Museum, and I, by chance, walked into the gallery where that big Courbet, The Preparation for the Wedding, is, you know. I almost fell flat on my back because that was one of the paintings that I remembered from Chicago, very vividly. I had forgotten it was at Smith, and running onto it cold like that was quite a surprise. I also remember a painting by Rockwell Kent called Mount Equinox, which impressed me very strongly, and a painting by Edward Hopper, which must have been that one called [Nighthawks], the girl sitting in the all-night café. But strangely enough, those are the ones that stick in memory.

NORDLAND: Were you there only one day? You saw the show only once?

DOLE: I can only remember spending that whole day in the--

NORDLAND: That was at the World's Fair? It was not at the actual museum building?

DOLE: No, this was at the Art Institute itself. The other thing I remember from that fair was Buckminster Fuller's Dymaxion House, which impressed me enormously. It was that circular house.

NORDLAND: Hung on a pole?

DOLE: Yes. And I have always sort of had an interest in Fuller since that time.

In contrast to this kind of naive, provincial, underprivileged background, I should bring in a very funny, and curious I suppose, thing, which is how I was spending my summers. Beginning about this time, for three or four summers I caddied at the golf course. And the money that I made from this, part of it, I took and subscribed to Vanity Fair, which I found in the corner ice cream parlor newsstand; and of all places, in Angola, to find Vanity Fair on the newsstand is a staggering accident. I subscribed to Vanity Fair, well, until it finally folded and was absorbed by Vogue. So, I did have those beautiful color reproductions in that magazine and quite a lot of pretty sophisticated articles about modern painting.

NORDLAND: While you were in high school?

DOLE: While I was in high school. I think it was just after I went to college that Vanity Fair folded down. I

remember several extraordinary Picasso reproductions and a Manet that was a knockout.

NORDLAND: And people like Gilbert Seldes and e. e. cummings would write articles for the magazine too.

DOLE: Right, yes.

NORDLAND: Well, then at Olivet you had really a general education. This experimental educator, Mr. Joseph Brewer, had quite a few unusual ideas about education, didn't he?

DOLE: Yes, I should mention that. Olivet College had been a Congregational college, founded sometime back in the 1850s or late forties as an offshoot from Oberlin College. During the Depression, it became increasingly difficult for the church to support the college. So, in 1934 there was a kind of financial arrangement under which Joseph Brewer came to the college as president and was permitted to initiate some rather sweeping educational changes, which began the same year that I entered there as a freshman. What he did was, in fact, to initiate the tutorial system, as it is done at Oxford. Joe had gone to Dartmouth and then had gone to Oxford and taken his degree there. He worked in London on the London Spectator for a considerable period of time before moving on to New York and getting involved in publishing with [G. P.] Putnam, who was Amelia Earhart's husband. They had published a number of very adventurous books,

like the first books of Gertrude Stein's which were published in this country and the English edition of Le Corbusier's first books, and they published Count [Alfred] Korzybski's Science and Sanity, the semantics book, and a number of other things. All of these people eventually came to Olivet while I was there: Gertrude Stein, Le Corbusier. Korzybski spent about a year there, giving a series of lectures for the college. At any rate, we had this tutorial system. He brought in a number of faculty members, young faculty people, several of them from Oxford. Then, during all the years I was there, there was a great resource for faculty members in the refugee scholars that were leaving Europe at that time. Quite a number of the faculty were drawn from among these refugees. But the important thing to me, I think as far as my educational experience there, was the fact that knowing all of these people in literature and the arts and so on and Olivet being located sort of on the way from New York to Chicago and points west, Joseph was able to entice people to stop at Olivet for a weekend or a few days, or for longer periods of time sometimes, but at least to give a lecture or to talk to students or in some cases even to stay on and give courses, but within a very informal kind of atmosphere. I should sometime try to sit down and reconstruct the list of people that I not only heard

lecture but in some cases got to know fairly well. Just off the top of my head, besides Gertrude Stein, with whom several students and I spent a very pleasant evening chatting, and Le Corbusier, who gave a lecture in French, which I didn't very much profit from, and Korzybski, who taught there, Carl Sandburg came over frequently to give readings and singings and whatever. Sherwood Anderson spent all of a winter; I guess he lived in Olivet maybe six months and went out and drank beer with us and had a jolly time all the way around. Ford Madox Ford lived there for the last couple of years of his life and wrote one of his last books, called The March of Literature [from Confucius' Day to Our Own], while he was there. He would have regular meetings with students in which he would read chapters from his book as they were completed. He was married to a very interesting painter. She painted under the name of Biala. Her proper first name was Janice, and she was Jack Tworkov's sister. She's still painting and had a show in New York just in the last couple of years I think.

NORDLAND: Janice Ford?

DOLE: Yes. She was later married to a guy who did covers for the New Yorker, a French name--can't remember [Alain Daniel Brustlein]. Anyway, Olivet also had a very active program of summer writers' conferences, and I spent several summers up there working in various capacities and met

people like W. H. Auden, Allen Tate, Caroline Gordon, and Jean Starr Untermeyer. Klaus Mann was there for a while. Well, anyway, that was the general milieu.

The other two things I'd like to speak about in relation to that, quite apart from my academic matters, was that Joseph had a considerable collection of works of art of his own, which he very generously put in the commons rooms and throughout the college, and they included, among other things, a rather large selection of very beautiful, early Eugene Berman drawings, which impressed me a great deal. And there were also some Vorticist works--

NORDLAND: Wyndham Lewis?

DOLE: Wyndham Lewis and so on. And a big [Fernand] Léger lithograph, a colored one.

NORDLAND: What period would that be?

DOLE: The Léger? It must have been from the twenties or so. And there was a small [Pavel] Tchelitchew painting that I remember, which was very handsome.

NORDLAND: Did you say that he had Berman paintings too or drawings?

DOLE: Well, he had mostly the Berman drawings. He had some paintings of Berman's brother, Leonid. And this neoromantic thing was his. Most of his collection, even today, is centered around that kind of thing. He also

made available in the library a selection of books, which I think was a very casual selection as far as he was concerned, books on art which were of enormous interest to me because they were not duplicates of anything available in the rather small library of the college. They included some of the early Museum of Modern Art catalogs, and among them the most impresive, I think, to me was the Fantastic Art, Dada, and Surrealism catalog and the Cubism and Abstract Art. There were several books on African sculpture, which I had not been familiar with before, which were very interesting, Le Corbusier's book Toward a New Architecture and the others, and some of the Bauhaus books (I think Moholy-Nagy's New Vision was one). Then there were also books on this neoromantic thing and some books on Mexican art and that famous book, called The Painter's Object, of Myfanwy Evans. But those things were very important to my education and totally outside the structure of any classes or formal study that I was doing. That's about the extent, I guess.

NORDLAND: Let's break there, then, and begin a new section talking about the development of your art from the time that you came to the University of California at Santa Barbara, having completed your work at UC Berkeley. You had two years of work as a lecturer, teaching the beginning drawing class, had begun to exhibit your work,

and you had decided that you were going to succeed as a college professor and secure your advancement based on your professional achievement as a painter. Let's talk, then, about what the problems were in 1949 and '50, and let's talk about your content and your techniques and how you proceeded to develop your art.

DOLE: When I came here, I was interested in and using a rather wide variety of media. I suppose I was using a wide variety of approaches to images also. Coming out of the Bay Area in those years, I was very much aware, on the one hand, of the kinds of things that Clyfford Still and Mark Rothko and people at the California School [of Fine Arts] were into. I'd seen a lot of the early work of [Richard] Diebenkorn and Hassel Smith and those people, and I was intrigued by this. It seems to me that this was a lot closer to abstract expressionism than most people give it credit for, and I was surely aware of that long before I was aware of what was going on in New York. At the same time, in my own work, I was involved in a kind of romantic approach to Ash Can kinds of subject matter, back alley things, which, I suppose, is a hangover from the social realist background of a lot of my training during the war, my interests during the war and earlier. As a matter of fact, that was the aesthetic within which George Rickey worked when I was working with him. He was not, you

know, a sculptor; he was a painter with a very strong social realist conscience and direction.

At any rate, at Berkeley, though, I was thoroughly conditioned to respect the picture plane, the integrity of the plane, the flattening of space, the avoidance of any suggestion of deep space, and so on, so I had a funny kind of system of taboos within which to work. I was still terribly interested in continuing my work in watercolor, which had begun when I was in the army. But by this time I also had begun doing oil paintings on gesso panels, using very thin color and a lot of glazes, and generally working very transparently with oil, even to the extent of putting on glazes over the white gesso with my fingertips. I think eventually it got so precious, the technique and the meager effect of it, that I really gave up oil painting because it turned so artificial for me. [laughter] I got my fingers so dirty too.

At the same time, having been involved with teaching drawing at Berkeley and using charcoal mainly as a medium, I'd never gotten around very much to exploring charcoal myself as a drawing medium. So, I made a big series of charcoal drawings extending over several years after I got here, which were very much admired by Donald Bear. I think at some time in this tape I should make a special tribute to Donald Bear and the influence he had

on my work and all the things this meant to me. But meanwhile in my own work at that time, I was working with a variety of media, and my early exhibitions were made up of oil paintings and watercolors and drawings all put together. I was also doing a great deal of small drawings in pencil on this miserable kind of yellow paper, which I've never been able to show because they're so cheap and the color of the paper changes so radically if they're exposed to light. I must have hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of pages of these, which I gathered primarily simply as material to work from in my watercolors and oils, which were constructed in the classic way, beginning with a few thumbnail ideas and developing them and changing and manipulating, gathering details from here and there, and putting it all together, and so on, and finally getting to the point of setting it down in a completed statement. Increasingly, I began more and more to be interested in architectural subjects as far as my paintings were concerned. I roamed around in the back alleys of lower Santa Barbara, lower State Street and around in that area, where I found a lot of fascinating material, fascinating to me in the sense of the color and texture and pattern of worn, faded, ruined walls and surfaces of that sort. Then I began also making a lot of synthetic architectural things, which came very close

to being purely abstract, except that they revealed a rather shallow space.

NORDLAND: Now, in 1951, you had a one-man show at the Santa Barbara Museum. How did you gather your strength for that, and what did you show? What was the thrust of that exhibition?

DOLE: The thrust of it was a kind of collection of everything that I had done up to that point that I thought was worth showing. [laughter] It was a very diverse group of works. There were oil paintings on panel, watercolors. I think there were some charcoal drawings. There were some drawings in pen and wash and some watercolors. I recall when I took the paintings in to the gallery, in to the museum, and set them around the gallery wall, I took one look at them, and I said to Donald Bear, "We can't go on with this show." The work looked so unrelated and so irrelevant from one picture to the next. And something which I didn't know at that time: how bad pictures look when they're just standing on the floor, leaning against the wall, and how differently they look later.

Don was very kind, and he said, "Why don't you just go over to the drugstore, have a cup of coffee, walk around for a little while, and come back and tell me how you think about it then."

By the time I came back, the paintings were all up on

the wall, and I changed my mind and permitted the show to go on.

NORDLAND: What gallery was it hung in?

DOLE: It was hung in the Von Romberg gallery, I think it's called, the one on the right as you go in, the one to the right off the Ludington court, which Don said was the best gallery. Light is the best, and it's most accessible. But it's not a gallery that you walk clear through, as you do the one that's directly ahead, so there's no way of missing the show. And the next show that I had, at the Geddis-Martin Studios [1952], was mostly a show of drawings, these charcoal drawings that I was talking about, quite a lot of them drawings of my children at that time as well as a bunch that were made around the railroad yards and architectural things.

But I began working more and more in watercolor and less in oil. I don't know if this was because of my interest, because of the time that was available to me, or because there were certain advantages as far as exhibitions were concerned, sending out to exhibitions; there were more watercolor shows maybe. I'm not just sure what the reasons were. At any rate, I was painting less and less in oil. Then, by the time that I went to Florence, I remember I only took watercolor materials with me, although while I was there I did buy oil paints and did

several oil paintings on canvas.

NORDLAND: You lived in Florence really in '55-'56, '56-'57?

DOLE: Yes. We left here in the summer of '55.

I guess this would be the place to introduce two events that probably lead to my working in collage more than anything else. One was that one of my colleagues on the faculty in the art department [Elliott Evans] had acquired from a relative of his wife a large collection of Japanese papers. The collection was made in the 1870s in Japan; this relative had been a mining engineer with a kind of very thorough packrat instinct of collecting all kinds of strange things while he was in Japan acting as a consultant to the Japanese government on mining problems. He apparently collected six pieces of every kind of paper he could find while he was there. Half of this collection, that is, three sheets of every kind, were given to the Smithsonian Institution, and I was given the other three sheets of all these marvelous papers. And having worked with Obata and knowing something about Japanese papers and Japanese techniques, I was intrigued by this but also a little bit puzzled and baffled because every sheet of paper had been very neatly folded in the middle, and this made it a little awkward to work with (a); and secondly, some of the papers were very, very

thin and absorbent and delicate but very, very beautiful in color and texture--not so much color, but the textural qualities.

Sometime in '53 or '54, I got the idea that I could paint watercolors with my usual techniques on this Japanese paper if I mounted it on a piece of stretched watercolor paper. That would give it the substance and structure and reduce the absorbency. I'd learned from Obata one technique for mounting paper, so I began mounting some of this paper on stretched watercolor paper and then painting watercolors on it. It made a beautiful surface to work on. At the same time, I did several oil paintings on gesso panels, where I also glued on pieces of this Japanese paper and painted over them or left them as collage elements, which were probably my earliest efforts at collage, technically.

NORDLAND: Those would have been around--

DOLE: Around '54, I think, would be the earliest, '54 and '55. At any rate, this whole activity was sort of abandoned when I went to Florence and got involved with a great deal of drawing and mainly watercolors still.

It wasn't until after I'd been in Florence for some time that at a secondhand store I found a very beautiful leather portfolio, a very old one, a tooled leather cover. And inside it was a collection of odds and ends of various

kinds of papers again. There were some letters that were, not dated with, like, 1850 and so on, but were rather dated such and such a year of the Risorgimento; and they were letters from the revolutionary elements during the Risorgimento from one cadre to another. Very interesting. But there were also pieces of marbleized paper. There were some pieces of the old kind of paper that was imported from Japan to make artificial roses, for which the term rice paper was originally used. There were some maps. There were a number of pages, printed pages, of a book on art history which had never been bound, never been made into a book; there were just the flat sheets. And there were all kinds of printed ephemera, I guess you would call it. Well, suddenly, sometime toward the end of my stay in Florence, all of these things came together: the idea that I had this Japanese paper, I had a technique for gluing it down and using it constructively, and I had all of this marvelous material out of which I could make images. And I think it was from the confluence of these two things that the notion of going ahead and doing collages came about.

NORDLAND: How many did you do while you were in Florence?

DOLE: I only did about four finished works that I recall, and then I sort of put the technique aside after I came back and got involved with teaching again until the summer

of 1958, when for no particular reason I started working in collage. And it's been the major medium for me to work in ever since.

TAPE NUMBER: II, SIDE TWO

DECEMBER 6, 1975

DOLE: At this point it might be apropos to bring into the discussion some of my thoughts about influences on my work, and particularly in relation to collage. I continually get this guff about Kurt Schwitters and that working in collage I'm just doing Schwitters over after nature, as it were, or something of that sort. But in all honesty, I don't think Schwitters was that much of an influence on my work. For one thing, I didn't know all that much about Schwitters, and I had never seen an actual Schwitters, so far as I know, until the big show at UCLA of his work, which was in--what?--1965.

NORDLAND: Around that, around '65 [Spring 1965].

DOLE: I had seen a very interesting article in the Magazine of Art [which] was published sometime in the early fifties, and I had a great admiration for the works I'd seen in reproduction, not because they were done in the technique of collage, but because of the extraordinary elegance of his composition. I think when I began working in collage myself, it was not so much the example of other artists' work in this medium that inspired me; rather, I looked to them as a kind of excuse or justification for doing myself, pursuing an interest that really grew out of the materials and not an attempt to emulate somebody.

NORDLAND: You got a kind of a permission from them to go ahead with this thing that you had come to want to do and had acquired the skills to do.

DOLE: Yes. And I recall in cataloging for myself the precedents that I could point to, in addition to Schwitters there were the early collages, of course, of Picasso, which I had seen--I saw the big Picasso show at the Chicago [Art Institute] when it came there in--what?--'39.

NORDLAND: That was the one done by the Museum of Modern Art?

DOLE: Right. What was it called? [Picasso:] Forty Years of His Art.

NORDLAND: Something like that.

DOLE: And then I saw the same show again in San Francisco in 1940. So I was very familiar with the actual works there.

Parenthetically, I should say that until I went to Florence, actually, I was not very familiar with art in the original, I mean, with original works of art. Growing up in the Middle West, as I've mentioned, outside of occasional trips to Chicago and seeing the museum there, I didn't have much opportunity to go to museums or to see exhibitions, actual works.

Well, anyway, in addition to the Picasso things, I

also admired very much some of the collages of [Georges] Braque, the ones that were a little bit later than the first essays, those kind of very linear ones with just a few planes of collage material.

NORDLAND: A few sparse elements.

DOLE: Yes. I was aware of the fact that an artist named Anne Ryan worked in collage, and I'd only seen, I think, a couple tiny reproductions of her work in Arts or Art News. Then I had seen a number of reproductions of--this will interest you--of [Alberto] Burri's Sacchi, which made an enormous impression on me, not, you know, the material things, but I still think they're among the most elegant compositions that I know. And then, finally, there was the example of Joseph Cornell, whose work I'd seen reproduced. Interestingly enough, because I'd never seen any of the boxes, the reproductions in my mind weren't all that much different from, say, the reproductions of Schwitters's work--obviously, combinations of images brought from various sources and put together. So, those were the main references that I made. In a kind of a different context, I also considered Chinese paintings, for example, and the kind of visual pattern that they make, where the accumulation of seals that different collectors have added to them, the written inscriptions and so on, the combination of these printed and written elements in

relation to the pictorial elements suggested a kind of image that was related to what I was, in my first collages, very much interested in doing too. [tape recorder turned off]

NORDLAND: If you feel that you've completed that section, let me return you to your European sojourn and have you tell us about those collages that you made while you were in Europe, particularly those that had to with drawings (that you made reference to) [that you did] while riding on trains.

DOLE: I had made, during a lot of the journeys I made on trains to Switzerland and all over Italy and so on, a great many little, tiny drawings in pencil of different landscape elements as they flashed by the window. They were very quick, of necessity, and very fragmentary also, and I had no particular use for these things in mind as I made them, except they were just kind of aids to memory. The idea was that possibly I would reassemble parts of them into a painted landscape. When I began to toy with the idea of working collage, I got the idea of translating some of these little sketches in pen and watercolor onto fragments of Japanese papers and cutting out shapes based on shapes I'd drawn or tearing shapes that were similar to them, shapes that referred to hills or mountains or clouds or trees--there's a pattern of irrigation ditches

in one of them--elements of this sort. And then in shifting these around on the page, I finally composed a landscape out of these separate and disparate images. So, this was the procedure and the nature of, I think, all of the collages that I did while I was in Florence, a technique that I then abandoned after I came back to this country for a year. I later picked it up with a different point of view in mind altogether. In fact, when I did start working in collage more or less continuously later on, for a little while I worked back and forth between using the technique in a kind of descriptive way to do landscapes (or do things which referred to landscapes)--

NORDLAND: Architectural things.

DOLE: Well, there were only a few architectural things; I think of more examples with landscape, Strata Data. (laughter] But I finally abandoned that because of the curious danger I think that's inherent in using collage in this way, of taking something that means one thing in one context and making it look like something else in another context. Well, a very specific example, the museum here [Santa Barbara Museum of Art] has a picture, a collage of mine, which is called Mono Lake. It consists of several horizontal bands of color that refer to sky and distant mountains and the water and the shore, and there are

two shapes that refer to those two islands in the lake, one of which is black and one is white. And in the foreground of the picture there is a piling in the water. It's a red strip of paper with some black on it, and what it actually is is, you know, the rolls of caps that you shoot in cap guns, and after they're shot, where the explosive was, the red paper is discolored by the flash of the powder. I'd taken a strip of this--which means, you know, outside of the pictorial content, it's just some burnt-out caps--but then moving it into the picture it becomes a piling with this particular color and texture. It's that kind of making something look like something else that can get awfully cute and tricky I think. It was in order to try to avoid this kind of trickiness that I think I increasingly began to abandon this descriptive use of the technique. And as a matter of fact, the descriptive pictures that I've done have since then been mostly watercolors and not collages.

NORDLAND: Well, somewhere around '58, '59, '60, you really got a considerable confidence in what you were doing and your work really became quite a different thing than it had been.

DOLE: That's true. I kept working back into this landscape thing, still using collage, but increasingly I began to develop these images that are not referential in that

sense to an actual visual experience. I got started on a series which I called "Memos," and my explanation of this, both the nature of the images and also the reason for the title, I explained in a way that is perhaps a little romanticized, but-- By this time I had become chairman of the art department, and I explain always to people that the landscape which I was familiar to work from, when I had more time to get out into the landscape, had been abandoned to the landscape I saw on my chairman's desk in front of me; these piles of papers and reports and documents and so on became my visual environment. And these collages were a recording of that kind of visual environment instead of the environment of hills and clouds and ocean and so on. I say it's a romanticized explanation because the materials that went into them-- If I were going to be consistent, they would be on university letterhead and done in blue papers that one uses for interdepartmental communication and so on, and instead the materials are much more varied and interesting. But I called them "Memos" for their reference to this office procedure environment. I did a series: there are about twelve or more of these which were varied enough to suggest directions of moving out into a whole variety of things.

The excitement of this different medium and the potentials of it were a great discovery as far as being very productive, and it hasn't stopped being this for me yet. I think I'm now interested in other kinds or other aspects of it. But in addition to being a way of working that offers me great advantages, there are things that I can explore--well, like color, for example--in a much more direct way for me than if I were working in oil paint, or acrylic, or any other medium.

NORDLAND: Well, how would it be more direct?

DOLE: It's more direct because, by preparing dozens or hundreds of fragments of papers to choose from, I have available for my visual experience this vast array of colors; and to make use of it, all I have to do is reach out and pick it up and put it on the picture's surface. Whereas with a palette covered with paints, I would have to mix it up and test it and so on. There's nothing wrong with this; it's just that I have available to my immediate experience this wide range of colors, and I can, by juxtaposing them, see these relations immediately. This is what I mean by its being [more direct].

NORDLAND: Now, in the "Memos," were you working in a manner analogous to the manner you had worked with your landscaped elements in Florence? In a sense, you had a ground, say, a manila color, and upon this you disposed

these printed, colored, and linear elements that you had drawn from your collage materials.

DOLE: Yes, that procedure was the same. They were all, I think without exception, done on a ground that was generally a piece of Japanese paper glued to the watercolor paper, and then the elements were moved around and attached to this ground.

NORDLAND: Now, there have been times when you have gone to the-- Let's say, in that early period it would seem that the elements were arranged in rather architectural gridlike patterns rather sparsely over the entire surface. But then on later ones you've used a complete kind of jig-saw puzzle over the entire space. In other cases you may have saturated the color ground in a strong color, like a red or a blue, and gone back to rather sparse elements of a lighter, more contrasting nature disposed on top of it. You have more than one way of working in your collage arrangements.

DOLE: That's true, yes. But my work isn't separated into periods where first I worked in one of these ways and then gave it up and began working in another way. I seem to keep moving from one of these to the next and to the other and back and forth and so on in a kind of cyclical way in which I haven't yet used up the possibilities of any of these procedures. The procedure that I choose for

each picture is--it can be kind of mysterious to me. I thought I had a way of explaining it, but it sometimes has to do with the elements that I have chosen to use in a particular picture, and then the procedure for using these is dictated by the nature of the elements themselves, which accounts for the ones sometimes where the elements are disposed simply on white paper because they're more visible and the relationships are clearer in such a situation. In other cases it's the play between the elements and the prepared ground that is the conditioning factor.

NORDLAND: Why don't you discuss that picture with the black ground that's been nearly obliterated?

DOLE: Oh, this one [Ad Hoc]. Well, this was another procedure that I've used a few times. Beginning with a very strongly colored ground, I've covered this with like a jigsaw pattern in which the pieces of the jigsaw don't quite fit together. The colored ground shows through only as a linear pattern between the shapes themselves, so that there's a play between-- Well, it's a way of creating a linear pattern, which in a funny way visually looks like it's in front of the pieces that are actually on top of it.

NORDLAND: Right. Well, then you've also prepared a gesso panel. You've prepared a masonite panel with gesso, and then you've adhered your pictorial elements to the gesso panel with rabbit-skin glue.

DOLE: That's right, yes.

NORDLAND: And in those cases we get usually a rather brilliant white surface with little texture.

DOLE: Yes. Well, one reason for using that material is that the white of the gesso is more intensely white than any other white available. It's much whiter than any paper. And also by preparing it, by scraping it and smoothing it out, it has a kind of surface texture that is smoother than any paper. I did a few in which I exploited the rough texture of the brushmarks, which didn't seem to me to work very well. As a matter of fact, I can't think of any finished work where I did use that.

NORDLAND: Do you smooth that out, or do you sand it? What do you do?

DOLE: My usual procedure is to scrape it with a razor blade till all of the brushmarks are completely worked out. Then the surface is rather shiny and unpleasant, and if I choose to have a more mat finish, I take a piece of dampened absorbent cotton and rub very gently over the surface, which dissolves just a tiny bit of the surface and redistributes it into a perfectly eggshell-smooth, marvelous surface. But it's still brilliantly white.

[tape recorded turned off]

NORDLAND: I'm looking at an image here of a watercolor of 1960 that's called Haybarn. Could you talk a little bit about this, Bill?

DOLE: Haybarn was done at the Hollister Ranch, where we spent all of our summers from 1958 on through '69, and most of our weekends. We actually lived there the last four years of that period all the time. Anyway, it's really a fairly straightforward but simplified representation of one wall of a barn at right angles to one wall of another barn. The one is placed very angularly in relation to the picture plane so that it creates a pretty static pattern of rectangular shapes that kind of read as a flat pattern but also can be read in the relatively deep space that they are placed in.

NORDLAND: Is this at all typical of your work at that point?

DOLE: I would say no, because it's one of the very few watercolors that I did during that period. I'd been doing quite a lot of drawing at that time, but the drawings were mostly of trees and other organic forms, so it isn't even very much like the drawings. The pattern, though, of shapes is similar to the pattern of shapes that I was using in the collages at the time, or a lot of them, anyway.

NORDLAND: Now, here's a work from 1961 called Strata Data.

DOLE: This is a kind of synthetic landscape, and it sort of evolved out of the horizontal bands of the paper itself, building up a pattern of horizontal bands, two

of which are covered with a kind of very dense pattern of small shapes of different colors and different textures that suggest like a rock wall or an accumulation of rocks in a stratum of earth. It's referential in a sense that there is a kind of memory of how earth is built up in these strata, and it's this attempt to kind of represent one thing with something else.

NORDLAND: But, of course, it's not observed--

DOLE: It's not observed, right.

NORDLAND: Now, here is a more orthodox, sparsely set-out collage of 1962.

DOLE: This is done on a ground of Japanese paper that I think is stained with watercolor, and then it is a very sparse pattern. It's a kind of corner painting composition, in a way, in which-- It's kind of an exciting game to play for me of setting up a pattern that is at first deliberately and outrageously unbalanced and then trying, in manners that are as little overt as possible, to bring the thing into balance or to create a strategy whereby its deliberate unbalance is not observable.

NORDLAND: This is nine and a half by thirteen and a half: pretty typical size of the time?

DOLE: This would be a very small one for that time, but the largest ones would be maybe twice as big in each direction. Except for a few much larger ones that I did

on gesso panels, I think, around that time.

NORDLAND: Now, here's a work which certainly avoids the corner picture comment. It's widely dispersed even though it still has relatively few elements in the total composition.

DOLE: There's a kind of a central image here, though, a central accumulation of things, which I think is more evident in the original than in this photograph, where these dark values kind of make a pattern of more diffused spots than they appear on-- The relation of these is stronger in its dark value than they are when the whole thing is seen in color.

NORDLAND: Well, now, in this work, which is called Bibliophile, which is slightly larger, you're into a real overall composition with a kind of a sense of a horizon line. Is that only fancied?

DOLE: Well, this is one that I think can be explained-- a number of things might be explained where I think there are different levels of interpretation that you might make in this. I don't mean to say that I intend people to see it [this way], but the way that I think about it myself is that first of all there's a kind of facade and that these are like window openings. And, admittedly, it's a kind of a ruined facade, if you look at it like that. But then there is the possibility of seeing this as horizon and this

is a foreground, or as elements seen against the sky for example, something of that sort. But then further I also see this for what it really is, which is a bunch of pages, blank pages out of books, placed contiguously and in this rectangular grid. And then if you want to go one step further, you can begin reading a bunch of words in it and try to formulate a literary message as well.

NORDLAND: Could you talk a little bit about your papers and about the materials that you've been gathering, either from your Florentine flea markets or bookstores, or from documents or marbled endpapers. What are your feelings about these materials?

DOLE: Well, I like the material of old paper, for example, because of its quality and the texture and the rather soft quality of the whites that the aging has. I originally set myself up a cutoff point of 1850 for the materials that I used in a very arbitrary way, because it was around 1850 that wood pulp papers were first developed and used, and I wanted to avoid the impermanence of wood pulp papers in my work, having seen what happens to, say, the newspapers in some of Picasso's and even in some of Schwitters's things. But it wasn't purely for that reason that I chose these old things. There's a kind of, I suppose, intentional aesthetic bias toward them. I like the kinds of typefaces that one finds. I also like

these accidental stainings and colorings and patinas and whatever that age and misuse have sometimes given to these old papers. The marbleized things are just, you know, in my mind, marvelous colors and textures.

NORDLAND: And you've probably used the marbleized elements in a way similar to the cubists, where you would just kind of define a plane with a little patch of marble paper. But you certainly can't be accused of that when you cluster words or bring together combinations of colors and a gray that might be made up of a texture of words, and then special words like antique words or antique typefaces which make up partial words that go into a collage.

DOLE: Well, I have a particular feeling about these printed words, and also written words--you know, about verbal symbols altogether--which is that, because of our training in verbal language, we acquire, I think, a kind of respect for the written word and the printed word, which is apart from or above or beyond or outside of whatever meaning it may have. If it is a word, we know that it must mean something. Picasso said something about not being able to read Russian, but he never doubted for a minute that it exists when he sees it, and using that explanation to somebody who didn't understand one of his paintings. I believe that in an image, if you place a letter or a word or a group of words, you create in that area a kind

of visual energy that is different from an intense color, a strong contrasted value, or any other purely formal device available to the painter. I sometimes use words in this way to create an area of interest or to create a kind of texture that has a visual weight that a purely abstract texture wouldn't have. It's like adding another primary color to your palette, almost, being able to create this kind of visual effect.

NORDLAND: You've even used Oriental languages, calligraphies, exotic writings, and fine penmanship as your extension of these primary colors.

DOLE: Right. And I'm totally shameless in using languages and scripts and so on that I don't understand at all. I do have, as part of my studio equipment, several foreign dictionaries. And I do know some Italian, and I have an understanding of vocabularies of French and German and Spanish and so on. But I don't really have that much command of language to be able to use them for intelligent verbal communication in a deliberate way.

NORDLAND: You would feel perfectly free in a work that might incorporate European languages and scripts to use, say, Turkish or Iranian script or Japanese or Chinese calligraphy?

DOLE: Right.

NORDLAND: You're not making a selection from exotic printings, but rather you're creating a new visual entity with these elements.

DOLE: Yes. Although sometimes I pick a character just because I think it's particularly beautiful, you know, like a Chinese or Japanese character, which I might not understand. If I could ever find a really good Kufic script, I'd love to use that, but I've never found any except reproductions that wouldn't be suitable.

[clock chimes] It always rings twelve no matter what time it is.

On one of the covers that I did for the Center Magazine, I had occasion--I can't think what reason I chose to do it, but anyway--I incorporated some Arabic script in it, and the people at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, before they would accept the work and before they would permit it to be used on the cover, had to rush around and have somebody translate it because they were terribly afraid that I incorporated some kind of Arabic anti-Semitic propaganda onto their cover. It turned out to be some innocuous comment on the Koran and of no political importance whatsoever.

NORDLAND: "Drink Coca-Cola." [laughter]

TAPE NUMBER: III, SIDE ONE

[UNDATED]

NORDLAND: We're going to talk on this side about your gallery relationships and the dealers that you worked with over the years.

DOLE: The first gallery experience that I had was an exhibition in 1952 in Santa Barbara at the Geddis-Martin Studios. [Ralph] Geddis and [Francois] Martin were primarily puppeteers, and they had a kind of cultural center for a number of years in Santa Barbara, which included, along with their marvelous puppet shows, exhibitions from time to time of artists' works, chamber music concerts, poetry readings, various kinds of cultural events. I had an exhibition there which was a lot of charcoal drawings, a lot of watercolors, and even a number of oil paintings, if I remember correctly.

NORDLAND: You only had one show there?

DOLE: I only had one show there. Not too long after that, they moved to Carmel and established a puppet theater, which is called the Tantamount Theatre.

Then the next person I suppose I should talk about in terms of galleries was Albert Duveen, who with Robert Graham, had established a gallery in New York called Duveen-Graham. Duveen had seen my work while I was in Florence-- [tape recorder turned off]

NORDLAND: Duveen-Graham in New York, and he had seen your work--

DOLE: Yes. He had seen my work when I was in Florence. He had seen my work in the Santa Barbara Museum, and Ala Story had persuaded him to write to me in Florence. If I remember correctly, I sent photographs to him, and we arranged to meet in Amsterdam. We were leaving from Rotterdam to come back to the States then. This meeting was a very interesting experience because he introduced me to proper Holland gin in the way that it's drunk in Holland. Then we went to the Rijksmuseum, and this was quite an experience because he pointed to this little Vermeer and said that he had been privileged at one time to put in a bid, on behalf of Lord Duveen, for a million and a quarter dollars for that picture. It was the fourth bid, so he didn't make it. The person who did buy it gave it to the Rijksmuseum.

At any rate, out of that came my first showing in New York, which was in 1958. I hadn't met Graham until we went back for the opening. Duveen's association with that gallery ended just shortly after my first show there. Duveen was dropped from the gallery; it became, and remains, just the Graham Gallery. Then I had a second show there in 1960 with Graham.

NORDLAND: These were collage exhibitions?

DOLE: Well, the first exhibition I had was [of] things which I had done almost entirely in Italy. There were a number of collages in the exhibition, but there were also a lot of watercolors, a few drawings. I don't know if there were any oil paintings or not, probably not.

NORDLAND: The second show, then, would have been more your mature work.

DOLE: Yes, and I think almost entirely collage.

NORDLAND: How did you terminate your Graham relationship?

DOLE: Well, I felt that I didn't have close enough contact with the gallery, being in California. I felt, probably incorrectly, that the gallery wasn't pursuing my interests energetically enough, so I asked to-- Well, I withdrew from the gallery. I didn't have any representation in New York for several years. But then Edith Halpert was visiting at Esther Bear's gallery and saw my work and asked if she could have some things for her Downtown Gallery. For a number of years she had work of mine and showed my work in her annual opening exhibitions in the fall. But she never gave me an exhibition there, a one-man show. She sold a number of works, and she bought some herself. There were three of my pictures in the auction of her collection.

NORDLAND: Was that a source of stress for you, that she never did make a show? Were you distressed about that?
DOLE: Well, I wasn't really frustrated because I was having a pretty energetic schedule of exhibitions out here. But it would have been very nice if that had ever come about. She was getting to be a little bit difficult to deal with though. Actually she felt my prices were advancing too rapidly for her to cope with, which was one of the-- Well, it was a strain in our relationship. But I felt that I couldn't have two price schedules, one for New York and one for California.
NORDLAND: You had an exhibition at Bertha Lewinson. Why don't you just discuss that very briefly and then get into your rather long and, I think, very successful relationship with Esther Bear? That will kind of establish how your career really unfolded in California, while these New York things were going on as counterpoint.
DOLE: Bertha had opened the gallery about a year, I think, before I became associated with her. It was at Henry Seldis's suggestion, I believe, that she asked me to join the gallery and have an exhibition. By the time of my exhibition, she'd moved into a much larger space on La Cienega. She'd been located back, way off the street there, somewhere in a little hideaway. That was quite a successful exhibition as far as sales and the reviews were

concerned. But within a year, I think, of my show there, she decided to close the gallery and give up art dealing altogether. Meanwhile, Esther Bear had opened her gallery.

NORDLAND: In Santa Barbara.

DOLE: In Santa Barbara. And her first exhibition actually was a show of my work. The gallery came about in a kind of curious way. She had had the large number of pictures that she and Donald Bear accumulated hung all over her house. We had borrowed the collection for an exhibition at the university here, and it traveled to two or three other museums, so that the pictures were away for a long time. So, she persuaded some of her artist friends, including me, to loan pictures to replace the ones that were out so that her walls wouldn't be totally bare. And while the loaned pictures were hanging there, MacKinlay Helm asked her if he could buy two of my pictures, which he did. It occurred to her that she could sell pictures off her walls, and the whole concept of the gallery in her home sort of developed out of that.

NORDLAND: Would that have been 1959?

DOLE: No, that was in 1960. Her opening exhibition was in August of 1960. George Rickey was teaching summer session at the university that summer, and he fashioned a door prize for the opening exhibition out of a silver

dollar. He made a beautiful hair ornament. The girl who won the door prize had, just previous to the opening, cut her hair very short, so she couldn't wear the ornament in it. [laughter]

At any rate, that was a very exciting show. I still had a lot of drawings that I had made in Florence, which was the bulk of the show actually. I think I must have had fifty or sixty drawings in the show, along with watercolors and some collages. During these fifteen years that Esther maintained the gallery, we had a very close relationship, and she has had exhibitions of my work probably at least every other year during that whole period. The reputation of her gallery is such that many collectors from Los Angeles and San Francisco, and also a great number of collectors from the East, have stopped in her gallery. Joseph Hirshhorn several times bought works of mine that were at Esther's, among other people. It's been really one of the most important things in the art world in Santa Barbara, having that gallery here.

NORDLAND: Well, then the next most important dealer probably in California was Rex Evans, who represented your work.

DOLE: Yes. After Bertha closed her gallery, I had offers from several galleries to join them. Joan Ankrum opened her gallery after Bertha closed, because Morris Broderson

had been represented by Bertha, and he was left without a gallery. So, Joan decided to open a gallery and wanted me to join them. There were several other offers that I had. But actually, on the advice of Wright Ludington, I decided to cast my lot with Rex Evans. That turned out to be an extremely good relationship. He's a really incredible personality, a marvelous man, and a very sensitive collector in his own right. He'd been a collector before he became a gallery person. And in addition to the personal relationship there, his partner, Jim Weatherford, was also a very good person to work with. But the scale of the gallery, the elegance of its appointments, all of this seemed to fit my work. And the way that the space was divided between the gallery and Rex's living room, in which he had works by other artists, like Henry Moore, Afro, and Edward Burne-Jones, I think the relation of those things to the exhibitions that he had gave a kind of quality to his operation that went above and beyond a commercial gallery situation. He was very successful in selling my work not only during the shows but throughout the year; he maintained steady [sales]. There were a lot of collectors who were in his circle; some of them bought things rather regularly. I think Hirshhorn also bought paintings of mine through Rex. I remember that Rex, who was a very large man, always said that in dealing with

Hirshhorn, it was so exhausting that he had to take to his bed for a full day after one session with Joe.

NORDLAND: Did Joe bargain and try to get five for the price of two?

DOLE: Absolutely. He had a disconcerting way of picking out what he wanted--you know, five or six things--and then taking the price list and saying, "I'll give you two hundred dollars for this one, seven hundred dollars for that, and six hundred dollars for this. That one is much too expensive; I'll only give you four hundred dollars for it." He would do this so fast, and he could add this all up in his head while you were trying to figure, "Well, that's not enough for this one," and so on. What he was aiming at was just a bunch of abstract figures that would add up to the total amount of money which was a predetermined discount of the total price that he'd already set on. Neither any of my dealers [nor] I could add or subtract as fast as he could. So we always lost. But that was all right.

NORDLAND: How many works of art did Hirshhorn acquire over the years for the museum and for himself?

DOLE: Well, I've just discovered there are seventeen of my things in the museum collection, and he must have more than twenty things still in his own personal collection besides the complete set of the lithographs I did at Tamarind.

NORDLAND: Well, how many shows did you have with Rex?

DOLE: I think I had six or seven maybe. Yes, I had seven shows there. The seventh one was actually after he had died, when for a while Jim Weatherford continued the gallery under Rex's name. But then I think after a year or so, he closed the gallery. But this last show that I had there had been planned before Rex died, which was rather a sudden thing.

NORDLAND: And then for a time you were not represented in Los Angeles.

DOLE: Well, no. Actually, before Jim really closed, I had gone over to Jodi Scully's gallery. I had felt, and correctly, that Jim wasn't going to continue the gallery very long, and Jody had just opened the gallery. A number of people whose work I liked had joined the gallery, and it seemed to be a very lively, energetic operation. So, I moved over there.

NORDLAND: And then how did the Staempfli Gallery, the new relationship in New York City, come about?

DOLE: That came about because [George] Staempfli's partner, Phillip Bruno, had been familiar for quite a long time with my work through pictures of mine that the Rickeys owned. Staempfli's been George Rickey's dealer for quite a long time, and when George had his big show out here in--San Diego?

NORDLAND: UCLA.

DOLE: UCLA. Phillip came out for that. I was in Albuquerque at Tamarind at the time and didn't meet him then, but Kate did, and they talked about-- You know, he liked my work and so on. Then Louise Deutschman, who had worked with the Waddell Gallery in New York, had been visiting out here, and she took back with her to New York a lot of my catalogs and things and happened to take them to Phillip Bruno at about the time that he was considering discussing having a show of my work. So, we began corresponding, and then George Staempfli came out to Los Angeles (he was arranging a couple of other shows). He looked at my work; so that was in the spring before my show, which was--what?--in November of '74. That was the spring of '74. He looked at my work and liked it, and we set up a date for the exhibition. I've been very pleased with that relationship, not only in terms of publicity and so on but the sales have been very gratifying.

NORDLAND: They've had sales not only at the time of the exhibition but continuing through the years?

DOLE: That's right, yes. And quite substantial ones.

NORDLAND: You felt a sympathy between people like Duveen, Esther, Rex, and Phillip Bruno for your work? You felt that they've understood what you were trying to do?

DOLE: Yes, they've been very understanding of my intentions

and very supportive, I guess you might say. And it's been a very good personal relationship too. In fact, I think I've been fortunate in having a lot of very good friends among art dealers, not only the ones who've represented me, but I've always cherished my friendship with Frank Perls and Felix Landau and a number of people in the business.

NORDLAND: Neither one of those people though, Felix or Frank, ever really handled your work.

DOLE: But somehow over the years we have developed a close friendship, and both of them came to a couple of my openings at Rex Evans, which I think was a nice gesture of friendship, for the competition to drop in.

NORDLAND: Well, now, you also have held shows in Berlin and in Rome. The Springer gallery in Berlin, I think, still has work of yours. Oh, it's been returned? Splendid. Why don't you discuss the Springer gallery and that relationship.

DOLE: The Springer relationship came about through Alfred Neumeyer's wife, Eva Marie, who, along with Alfred, had been living in Berlin. It must have been in 1955. She suggested to [Rudolf] Springer that he have an exhibition of my work. And with an exhange of correspondence, this was arranged for, I think, the summer of 1956. So, I took my work on a train and went to Berlin and had this

exhibition. Springer was an extremely interesting man who had a certain amount of independent means, and he has always operated his gallery in a highly individual-- He's always been more interested, I think, in showing new work and in collecting things himself than in actually selling his work or being involved in a commercial venture. I had a second show with him in the winter of 1964, when we were back in Europe. We'd been in Rome previous to that, and that was another marvelous experience, staying with him in his home. The house is a very large spacious, beautiful house, and it must have been after that show that Springer came here and visited in California. More recently, my wife saw him in Berlin, but I haven't seen him since--just about a year.

NORDLAND: Was he successful in handling your work?

DOLE: He sold maybe half a dozen things. He sold two pictures to the publisher of Der Spiegel. He sold one thing to a Krupp. He bought a couple of things for himself, and there were a couple of other sales besides that. Correspondence with him was an erratic experience. But I've always regarded him as one of my closest friends--very interesting, extremely interesting personality.

NORDLAND: What about the Rome show?

DOLE: The Rome show is a rather strange thing. It was arranged through the man who had the famous Obelisk

Gallery [Galleria L'Obelisco], Gaspero del Corso, who was acting as artistic advisor to a Principapessa Colona i Barberini, who had a little, very chic gallery called the Sagittarius, which is no longer, I think, in operation. It was just off on a little side street just south of the Via Veneto, a very chic-chic sort of neighborhood with very elegant surroundings. It was an interesting exhibition but not very successful in sales or otherwise.

NORDLAND: No particular critical attention?

DOLE: There were newspaper reviews, and the embassy put out a lot of press stuff, but that was about all.

NORDLAND: Well, your prime gallery at this point would be Staempfli in New York and Scully in Los Angeles. You haven't really shown with Scully too many times, have you?

DOLE: No, I think I've only had two shows there. But they have maintained quite a lot of my work in the gallery and show it in group shows and have it hanging upstairs. And it's sold well too.

NORDLAND: Let's catch up with your London exhibition at McRoberts and Tunnard [Gallery] and then your later exhibition in Mexico City.

DOLE: Chronologically, they go the other way around. The Mexico City show would be 1961, and this came about through the efforts of Ala Story again, who had met [Antonio] Souza in Mexico City and recommended my work

to him. This was arranged, and it was an extremely interesting experience. I took the work down with me unframed and unmatted to avoid all kinds of problems with customs and so on. It was very elegantly matted by a binder who had done Garcia Lorca's bookbinding in Spain. Souza was a mercurial personality who was very, very wealthy, and his gallery was in his home, which was one of the most beautifully decorated places I've ever seen. His own collection of work [included] not only pre-Columbian things but African and contemporary work. He was a close personal friend of [José Luis] Cuevas; although I don't think he showed Cuevas's work, he had an immense number of Cuevas's drawings and letters to him which were all framed and covered the walls in this big stairway that must have gone up three stories, covered solid with Cuevas's works. As it turned out, that was a curiously successful exhibition. Antonio bought one work for himself, and then a collector by the name of Dr. Attilio Gil, who fancies himself to be the Mexican Joseph Hirshhorn, bought eight pictures from the exhibition. This man made a fortune manufacturing baby food in World War II and had the reputation of being a collector who doesn't have his work hanging but has it stored away somewhere. When he wants to show work, he sits people down in a fancy gallery and has the work brought

out one at a time and set up on an easel to show them. The negotiations of that sale went on all the time I was in Mexico City, which was about ten days. And they extended on for, it seemed like, several weeks afterward before it finally was finished. By a curious coincidence, Souza was also a very good friend of Rex Evans, and my first show at Rex Evans was partly made up of things which had been previously shown at Antonio's and were then smuggled out of Mexico by Rex, who was visiting down there. I think the gallery has been closed and reopened, and whether it is still in existence or not, I don't know.

The London exhibition: Ala Story had a little bit to do with it also. [Neil] McRoberts was an American who was married to a woman [Augusta McRoberts] whose sister [Cornelia Chapman] lives in Santa Barbara. The sister's husband [Roger Chapman] is a professor emeritus of music at the university here, and he was very good friends of ours. McRoberts and his wife were visiting out here previous to my show in London, so I had the opportunity of showing him my work, and the exhibition was arranged in that way. We went back to London for the exhibition, and the plan was that I would continue being represented in the gallery and would normally expect to have a show there every two years. But about a year after my first show there, McRoberts was killed in a very tragic accident.

He was fox hunting, and his horse fell on him, and he was killed. The gallery was closed after he died. [Peter] Tunnard, I believe, came to New York, and whether he's still in New York or whether he's gone back to London, I'm not sure. He's a good friend of Phillip Bruno.

NORDLAND: Could you talk a little bit of how you feel about the work of Kurt Schwitters and when you first became acquainted with him?

DOLE: I can't really remember exactly when I may have first heard about Schwitters, but certainly from the time I was in college I knew about him and was interested in the work of the dadaists and the surrealists. I must have been aware of his work ever since then. The first definite, strong impression I have of looking at reproductions of his work was an article in the old Magazine of Art, which must have been from sometime around the late thirties or possibly even the forties. I still have a copy of it I think I could show you in my office. The idea that he used this junk material was of less interest to me, I think, than my response to the quality of the typographic material and the effectiveness that these letters had. Whether they were done by means of collage or whether he had done them by hand made very little difference as far as I was concerned because in reproduction the three-dimensional quality of the collage medium is negligible. The

thing that I did like particularly, in addition to his quality of typography, was the kind of composition that he was involved with. I think simply his arrangements: they've always appealed very strongly to me, the kind of elegance that they have. I made a statement on an earlier tape that I hadn't seen any of his original works that I can remember prior to that show at UCLA. There actually was a show of his work earlier than that at Pasadena. As a matter of fact, I was represented in an exhibition that Tom Leavitt put together.

NORDLAND: Which accompanied that show?

DOLE: Right. It was George Herms and several other people.

NORDLAND: Oh, I remember that now.

DOLE: I had about six or more things he borrowed from Rex Evans.

NORDLAND: There was a work in that show which involved a crumpled-up American flag.

DOLE: Right, a scandal. But those must have been then the first actual works of Schwitters I had seen.

NORDLAND: You talk about the composition. You found it had appeal--

DOLE: But I feel that my work is very different.

NORDLAND: What was the appeal of his composition?

DOLE: The marvelous variety and the way that the words and the letters become abstract shapes, because they're

usually cut off before they make a complete word or a complete statement. The large scale of letters cut off to make a shape which you can identify as a letter, but it's not a complete letter--

TAPE NUMBER: III, SIDE TWO

[UNDATED]

DOLE: Vulgarity maybe isn't the best word, but the very strong contrast with light and dark, the sometimes very dramatic color contrasts, which I wasn't aware of until I saw a lot more of the original works-- I'm thinking also of the three-dimensional constructions, where the material is even less, is more inelegant than in the paper collage.

NORDLAND: Maybe found materials not formed by--

DOLE: Yes. I think I'm more concerned with materials that are inherently attractive in one way or another. But then my intent has never been, as his apparently was, to shock. I was working from the relatively acceptable position of collage as being a more or less legitimate technique, whereas with him it was a technique of protest.

NORDLAND: A radical resort to-- His art occurred at a time when there was a structural reorganization of the [inaudible] of works of art. He based his work one way or another on cubism and things that came out of cubism, like futurism. The vortex that he was making, for example, that kind of reordering, has not been in your mind?

DOLE: No, it's already been done. I merely wanted to do Schwitters over after nature. [laughter]

NORDLAND: Look out. You better say right now that

you didn't mean that. [laughter] Somebody will read it later on and maybe want to use it, thinking that that [applies] to you.

DOLE: All right, I'll deny that statement. There's a quality in his work which I became aware of later, after I'd seen quite a number of them, that I hope I'm able to emulate to a certain extent, and that is the way that he managed to achieve a kind of monumental scale in works that are very tiny in their physical dimensions.

NORDLAND: You came very close to that in the blue one, which we were looking at just before lunch.

DOLE: I think the better examples in my work get a kind of big scale on a small format, and I really don't know how you do it, how I do it, what the secret to doing it is.

NORDLAND: I remember the word that came to my mind as you said that was scale, and we groped around trying to figure out what it was, the relationships of sizes to general format, and then the large scale of the letters, as you pointed out. Remember?

DOLE: Yes. It also has something to do with the variety of sizes. There's something about a surprising jump from large to very small perhaps. But certainly variety is a part of it.

NORDLAND: You as much as said that surprise was one of these elements that you were seeking in every work.

DOLE: Yes. It's a good word, I think, and covers what may be several related impulses.

NORDLAND: I was interested in asking you about Kurt Schwitters because he is a collage figure who works in small scale, who obviously would be thought of in comparison with you and your work. There are certainly a lot of other collage artists, notably the original cubists, Picasso and Braque. Did either of them have any kind of impact on your thinking about your work? Surely their work was known to you early in your career.

DOLE: Yes, I was familiar with their work. Outside of the fact that they were technically collages, none of the works of Picasso in this medium particularly appeal to me, with the possible exception of a still life from 1913 of Picasso's with part of the workd "Hennessey" on it (I think the title is Still Life with a Guitar). On the other hand, there are a number of collages of Braque's from around 1912 and 1913 that appeal to me tremendously as works of art. At the time when they had their greatest appeal for me I think I was aware of their being collages only incidentally, and I suspect that the elegance of these works and their particular qualities of composition were quite influential on work that I'd done earlier than my own collages.

NORDLAND: Works you mean you'd done in your painting period?

DOLE: Right, yes, my watercolors.

NORDLAND: Actually you didn't know these paintings first-hand; you knew them only in reproduction. Isn't that true?

DOLE: Yes. I had seen some of the Picassos because the big show, the Museum of Modern Art show, came to Chicago in 1939, I think it was, and I saw it there. But the Braques I only knew from reproductions. I also knew of the collages of Max Ernst, which appealed to me a great deal.

NORDLAND: You mean the collage novel?

DOLE: Yes. And although their relevance to my own work as far as style is concerned is pretty strained, still, in looking to justification, I suppose, for the technique itself, this [was a] prototype. And then I had seen reproductions of a few works of Anne Ryan before I began my own work in the medium. And the early works of Burri, the Sacchi, suggested to me the possiblity of this as a way of making pictorial images.

NORDLAND: When would an artist like Burri have first come to your awareness?

DOLE: Well, it much have been-- When were his works first shown in this country?

NORDLAND: They were first shown around '52 in Chicago. And then Paul Mills, who was then at Oakland, made an exhibition,

which was at Colorado Springs, Oakland, and Pasadena.

DOLE: Well, I saw reproductions. It must have been in Art Digest, or--

NORDLAND: It could have been.

DOLE: --Art News at that time.

NORDLAND: Right. A year or so later "Burri Collages a Picture" was in Art News.

DOLE: I don't remember seeing that. But I do remember some of the small black-and-white reproductions. They were really exciting to me, the quality that these had. I remember vaguely the kind of stamped printing on some of the sacks.

NORDLAND: The stencils.

DOLE: Yes. And the linear quality of the stitching, the peculiar kinds of line that he evolved. And his wonderful compositions, which again, like the Schwitters things, were more exciting to me than the way they were made and the materials they were made from.

NORDLAND: Did you have a sense of the vulgarity of materials that you expressed in relationship to Schwitters?

DOLE: Not in the same way, I think, because these materials were aged in a more dignified way, through use rather than being simply in the gutter. [laughter]

NORDLAND: You mentioned that in the Bay Area when you were a student at Berkeley, you became aware of the painting

and inadvertently the collage of [Jean] Varda. Was that just an awareness that people were using collage, or was there anything in it that pertained to you?

DOLE: Well, somehow the nature of his work was so uniquely personal that I don't remember consciously relating these to, say, Braque and Picasso. It was just kind of a freaky sort of self-expression.

NORDLAND: An idiosyncracy.

DOLE: Yes. I met him a number of times at that bookstore in Berkeley that also had a gallery, the name of which escapes me [Cody's]. It was a very avant-garde hangout for several years in Berkeley. Varda was such a personality, and the work was so closely related to his flamboyant personality that he put forward. But I don't think I ever had any impulse at all to emulate either his particular technique or sensibility.

NORDLAND: How about Joseph Cornell? Is he a person that you've been aware of?

DOLE: Yes. And this is a person [to whom] I should acknowledge a great deal of debt. Like the other people that I've been talking about, it was much after I was first aware of his work, much later, that I saw an actual box. And I think because of this, because of being aware of them only in two-dimensional reproduction, the concept that they were actually three-dimensional structures is

very much diminished. I saw them as--

NORDLAND: On one plane.

DOLE: --as flat patterns, in which the fascination of the elements is even more exaggerated, probably, than in their actual three-dimensional presence. But I think the kinds of imagery that he was involved with, the kind of aesthetic, maybe, of them, has something to do with my own taste and interest in things. Although his things are rarely literary or verbal, and mine are strongly pointed in that direction.

NORDLAND: He did use words though, like "Hotel Universe," or some kind of a title very often.

DOLE: Yes, but they're more pictorial elements, like the figure in the Medici Slot Machine, and the actual things, like birds' eggs and clay pipes, eggcups and so on.

I probably should also mention that book of Saul Steinberg's called The Passport; although it isn't really very much involved with collage, the absurd kind of calligraphy and typography and stamping and so on, the relevance of these images to printed and written documents is something that occurs in my own work from time to time.

NORDLAND: You were aware of Steinberg, I suppose, from college days.

DOLE: Not that early because I don't think he published anything in American periodicals--did he?--until World

War II, and my college days were pre-World War II.

NORDLAND: Well, I was thinking of your--

DOLE: Oh, my graduate work. Well, I don't remember when his first book came out, but it was about that time that I really got interested in his work. I think the first things I saw were published in Life magazine maybe, and they were reprints of things which originally appeared in European publications. So, I've followed his work for a long, long time. I consider him one of the master draftsmen of our day.

NORDLAND: Sure. Around '45 there was a book published by New American Library, just a little pocket book that was just stuffed full of absurd and crazy ideas. I know I remember reading it cover to cover, reading it until it fell apart.

TAPE NUMBER: IV, [VIDEO SESSION]

FEBRUARY 21, 1977

DOLE: I'm William Dole. This is the fourth showing of this exhibition ["William Dole Retrospective 1960-1975"] which began last April at the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery and was shown later at the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center and at the Fine Arts Gallery in San Diego. This is the fourth and final showing, at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art. Santa Barbara is my home.

* * *

We're now upstairs at the museum in an exhibition that has been installed around the gallery. Since this was the last showing of the retrospective exhibition, it was decided to have at the museum, in connection with that show, a selection of earlier work from local collections. There are about forty pictures here, the earliest one dating from around 1947 and a couple of them a little bit later than 1960, at the beginning of the exhibition of collages. Included in this exhibition are drawings and watercolors and oil paintings. Some of the works were shown at my first one-man exhibition in 1951, which was held in this same museum. It was possible to round up five of the six oil paintings that were shown in that exhibition, and they are included in this exhibition.

* * *

Probably the earliest picture in this [main] exhibition is this one, which is called Ghost Town and it has a vaguely referential quality to it. It isn't a specific description of buildings in a street, looking down a long, narrow street, but this was in my mind somewhat, and it is of importance. The other early picture, as far as the chronology of this show is concerned, is this one, which is the eleventh of a series that I call "Memos," which had to do with typography and various kinds of printed elements arranged in a very open kind of composition, as you can see from this one.

At the time that I was doing these, I was also concerned with pictures that had a relevance to landscape subjects, like the one that we can look at over here. This one, which I did when we were living on the Hollister Ranch, is called Santa Ana Condition. I think it's obvious, the relevance of these shapes to the sun setting, and this cloud pattern up here, and the hills and fields down below. This was a very appealing thing to me to make this reference to landscape. But I very soon discovered that there were a lot of traps in this, that it was easy to become too tricky in making the reference [to] something in the landscape being represented by something that had a totally different meaning in its inception, a piece of

typography or something of that sort. For various reasons I moved away from that kind of subject matter to kinds of patterns that we can see over here.

* * *

I don't feel in my work that is covered in the fifteen years of this exhibition that there is a discernible single line of development from one style to another style or a progression of that sort. I think what I've done is to have a number of themes that I return to from time to time. And these themes are determined by an interrelationship of the way that I have dealt with the ground, the background of the composition, the elements that I've chosen to make the composition from, the color, and finally the patterning of these elements in relation to each other.

For example, in this one [Move on Down the Line] the ground is a gesso panel, a very intensely white gesso panel, on which I have chosen to place a very large number of small collaged elements that are close in value and only in a few instances involved with color, as in these darker shapes up here and in areas of color that are behind the collaged elements that I have placed over them, leaving a kind of linear pattern of the colored background. There are only a few typographic elements in this one. The intention was to use these simply as texture

or value or something of that sort. In contrast to that kind of pattern, there is this pattern, which in one sense is similar to the other in that it's very densely packed--the entire surface is covered with collage elements --but in this case, instead of this very subtle relationship of values and color, I've chosen to use very strong and extremely varied typographic elements and some elements of quite strong color that contrast in color and also in value with the typographic elements.

I should mention that most of my pictures are done on paper, usually on white watercolor paper; and in this kind of pattern [Congeries] the white of the watercolor paper becomes a very important element in the whole visual effect. Against this white ground I've placed these isolated elements that make a different kind of pattern. It's rhythmically very different, and it obviously is visually very different. The relation of these shapes to each other and to the picture plane are sort of what the picture's all about.

Still another kind of pattern is this one where the collaged elements touch each other and cover a large area of the surface, but they make a very complicated and unified single shape against the rectangle of the picture plane. The intended illusion here is a kind of, I suppose, architectural reference, but much less overtly so than in

the first example that I talked about.

To go to another approach to pattern: in this one I have begun with a white watercolor paper, and on that I have pasted a piece of off-white Japanese paper with a kind of irregular edge, which is typical of handmade papers. Playing this irregular edge against the very precise edge of the mat is part of the intentional effect. Against this ground of the Japanese paper, I've placed these colored elements in a way that is neither as isolated as the linear one that I spoke of a couple of pictures back nor the single unified shape of the last one I pointed to. I prepare all of the colored shapes that I use by painting them or dipping them or staining them somehow with watercolor. In this particular one, the manner in which the color has been applied to these very transparent, little fragments of paper has produced texture and pattern that is basically the idea of the picture.

The same sort of application I've used in this picture [Te Deum] with perhaps even more varied and stronger textures involved. In this picture there's a dense patterning in which the entire surface of the picture plane is covered with the collage elements. It's a completely packed composition.

To go to a different approach altogether: This [Exemplum] is kind of a unique one in that I had the idea

originally of a kind of document to begin with; and many documents, much of the material that we write on, is lined. So, beginning with the watercolor paper, I made these lines across here, and then I pasted a variety of elements that are typographic, calligraphic, symbols of various sorts, seals, and so on. And instead of doing this the obvious way and pasting these things on and doing the lines over them, where the lines were originally I've cut the pieces apart and pasted them separately so that the line runs through and not over the shapes, a terribly laborious way of going about doing it, but a kind of fascinating one to me.

Another approach to the process of making a picture is in this one where the ground, instead of being the white of the paper or the white of the gesso panel or a piece of colored paper, I've painted the ground directly with probably at least a half dozen pale washes of watercolor of slightly different hues or values to build up a kind of a very soft, but slightly varied color. And against this I've placed this pattern of rather sparsely arranged, colored shapes. And in some cases I've actually painted some of the shapes in, rather than using just purely collage.

In the case of this one [Tryst], the colored ground, instead of being painted on the original paper, is a piece of green Japanese paper that I've pasted on, having first

repainted it with watercolors so that it would be sure not to fade; and then the composition is developed on that.

* * *

Another approach to this patterning is found in this one [Ad Hoc] where I began with a ground, a background, that originally was painted in black with a few areas of orange in it. The picture was developed then by pasting over this dark and colored ground small pieces of various off-white papers and fitting them together rather loosely so that between the shapes the dark ground shows through. The result is a kind of counterpoint between the slightly different values and colors of the collage elements and the linear pattern of black and orange that was developed through the relationship of these two parts.

Finally, another kind of patterning develops out of the shape of the rectangle of the picture plane. I have experimented with squarish shapes, with vertical shapes, with horizontal shapes; and the shape that I come back to quite frequently is this long, narrow, horizontal rectangle which is represented in this example [Narrative]. In developing this kind of composition, I'm usually conscious of the relation between our habits of reading from left to right and the way that the composition develops within this long, narrow rectangle, our habit probably of looking

at it from left to right and the importance of the placement of the elements in that contest.

* * *

In this shot we're upstairs in my house at 340 East Los Olivos in Santa Barbara, looking out toward the front of the house, the front bedroom. The pictures that are on screen are four images from a suite of eight lithographs that I did in 1977, when I was an artist in residence at Tamarind. They're numbers five, six, seven, and eight of the suite, which is called "Small Mnemonic Devices."

This is looking into the bedroom that we call the Victorian room, although not much of the Victorian furniture is in evidence.

This looks out into my youngest daughter Katy's room.

And that's looking into the upstairs parlor, I guess we'd call it (actually it's called the TV room).

On the stair well here is my collection of prints and pseudoprints. The pseudoprints are mostly engravings that I bought in Rome, like the bird skulls that we just looked at and these two columns, which are very interesting images to me, but they're not fine arts prints in the collector's sense of the word. This is a print by Robert Birmelin, who teaches at Queens College, an etching of a fish. Ben Sakaguchi. Another series of anonymous prints.

A hand-colored lithograph of seals from some sort of a book on natural history. Thomas Cornell, and above that a Stefano della Bella. These are a little too far away to identify. There's a Goya and an [Odilon] Redon and an [Aristide] Maillol among other things. This is a Japanese print of a fish or fishes, and I'm not sure who the artist is. This is a Korean sign carved on wood. This I think is a Kunisada; it belonged to my wife's father, a very beautiful print, I think.

This is looking through the hall toward the back of the house out on the big back porch.

* * *

I'm now sitting in the library, talking to Gerry Nordland.

NORDLAND: You came to Santa Barbara in 1949?

DOLE: Yes, in '49, to teach at the university.

NORDLAND: And when did you move into this home?

DOLE: We moved into this home in 1960. We had outgrown the house that we bought when we first came here because by the time we came into this house we had six children. (The seventh was born after we got here.) But even before we moved into this house, we'd been spending our summers and weekends at the Hollister Ranch. I had my second sabbatical in '63-'64, and we rented this house then to go to Rome, and then when we came back, we came back to the

house at the Hollister Ranch and kept renting this place for several years and lived up there all the time. I had a large studio up there where I did most of my work. I've used the attic in this house a little bit for a studio, but I've done very little work in the house itself.

NORDLAND: It's a very sheltering house. It gives you a great sense of warmth and protection, and all of the friendly accumulations of a lifetime are around you. I'm sure that the house has been an influence in your art as well.

DOLE: It probably has. It's strange: now we only have one child living at home. The other children seem to like to come back for weekends; we usually have several of them here.

NORDLAND: Well, I notice all the cribs and perambulators and whatever.

DOLE: Those are for the grandchildren who also come. [laughter] There're four of those now.

NORDLAND: Why don't you take this [family photograph] and talk about that family.

DOLE: Well, this is a photograph that was taken at the time that Hilary, the second daughter, was getting married. We had all come in from the ranch at about six o'clock in the morning for the appointment to take this picture. Everyone was in the most foul humor you could

imagine from getting up so early and from the fact that a couple of the daughters had brought home from college the most disagreeable boyfriends that they could find. [laughter] Anyway, to identify them all: beginning over here is Billy, who's the oldest, and then Heidi, Hilary (who's the one who was getting married), Deirdre, Deborah, Jonathan, and down here is Katy, the youngest one, who must have been then around five or six--and she's now fourteen (so that would place this in time).

NORDLAND: And then there's Bill and Kate Dole there with their stars around their heads.

DOLE: We have a more recent group picture, but it hasn't been developed yet, I think.

* * *

NORDLAND: Now we are in Bill Dole's studio at the University of California at Santa Barbara. It's a very spacious, well-lighted, attractive studio, where he's been working for a good many years. Why don't you show us around, give us an idea of what you do and how you do it?

DOLE: Well, first of all, I've been working about seven years in this studio, and most of the work I've done in that period has been done in this studio.

Where I'm sitting makes it look as though I do a lot of business here, but actually this desk is mostly where I eat my lunch.

The bookcases behind here-- People frequently ask me about the large quantities of materials that I must have to work with, the vast store of bins and barrels of scraps of paper and so on. The few books up here are broken books that I have found in flea markets and so on. I hate to cut up a whole, useful, or good book; on those occasions when temptation has overcome me and I've done it, it's turned out to be bad luck. So you see what battered and fragmentary things these are; usually incomplete, usually volume two of seven or something of that sort, and poor survivors of a better day usually. This shelf and a few things here are my working stock of books.

The supply of papers that I have, that I use as the ground for these pictures, I keep in these cupboards over here. It's obvious, I suppose, that I'm sort of nuts about paper, and I've been a great pack rat in stockpiled papers for years and years. Every chance that I have to buy a beautiful sheet of paper of some sort or other I have done that, and I have papers from France and England and Italy and Japan and China and everywhere, which I have stockpiled, and I probably have enough stashed away one place or another to last for six or seven lifetimes. Anyway, these are the ground that I use, the basis for pictures. And I have, well, quite a lot of it stored away here.

As far as the barrels and bins and so on of scraps,

what I really have is in these top two drawers. At one time I tried systematically to file these in folders by various kinds of categories, most of which I've forgotten now. [laughter] This really looks like it's junked in here. A few old newspapers, like this very rich one from Norwalk, Connecticut, from 1879, which is not a wood pulp paper like newspapers are today; it's still after one hundred years a very tough and not-too-discolored paper. Here's a newspaper from the Civil War, Frank Leslie's Illustrated News, which also is in very good, sound condition. Well, there's a little bit of everything in here. The second drawer is similar to the first. And that, besides the things that are stacked around here and on the other worktables, is all that I have to work with. A little bit goes a long way when you work in the scale that I'm working in.

NORDLAND: Well, now, what kind of adhesives do you use? What kind of method or technique have you evolved for joining paper to paper so that it's permanent?

DOLE: Well, first, let me show you where I color my papers.

* * *

All the colors that I use in collages, all the colored papers, are papers that I've colored myself with English watercolors of the best quality. I usually color

fairly small scraps of paper, maybe as small as this, sometimes by simply mixing the watercolor and applying it with a brush in as even a coating as possible--like this. This is Japanese paper that I'm coating, and because it's very absorbent, the color runs right through. It's sometimes necessary to put on a coat like this and let it dry and then turn it over and paint it from the back; it goes through that direction, and each time it goes through, a little more of it stays in the texture of the paper until finally you can build up a pigmentation that runs all the way through the paper, which is a very different and much more intense color than you would get with just a pigment on the surface of the paper. Sometimes I take this absorbent paper, and when I have color like this in a little bowl, I simply dip the paper in it like this, and because the paper is very absorbent, it absorbs the color from the puddle of mixed color in the jar, in the bowl. I used to prepare very conscientiously large numbers of these colored pieces like this and keep a complete stock of the different colors: all the reds, the yellows, the blues, greens, and so on; and when my stock of one color ran low, I would take time out and paint up large quantities of them. Actually I had a couple of my daughters working for me in preparing colors at one time. But more often now, I find that I am

inclined simply to prepare colors as the need arises or for a particular purpose. It's a lot more spontaneous somehow that way, I think.

I rarely change a color on the picture that I'm working on. If the color swatch that I've pasted on isn't right, I take it off and put on one that is right; I don't even like to cover over one with another. In that way I keep the surface very thin, very close.

Starting from the beginning with the picture, I mentioned that I have these papers over here, which are for the most part handmade, all-rag watercolor papers from, for example, Arches, which is a French paper [Papeteries d'Arches], or Crisbrook, which is an English paper [J. Barcham Green], or Fabriano, an Italian paper [Catiere Milani-Fabriano]. Sometimes an American paper made by Strathmore. At the present time I rather favor Arches in what is called the 300-pound weight, which is very much like a heavy cardboard. The paper is dampened and then attached to a drawing board, while it's still damp, by gum tape all around the edges. When it dries, it shrinks and becomes very tight and very smooth, and this is the surface that I work on.

There are various schemes for commencing the work from that point on, one of which is to put a wash or washes of color on the watercolor paper. This is one that I'm

currently working on. I've put a couple washes of dilute India ink on this, and this is the way I sort of go about doing it. I use distilled water (not trusting the minerals and so on in Goleta branch water). And then, with a few drops of ink-- When you put one drop in, it does a marvelous thing. With India ink, you can keep putting very pale washes over each other indefinitely and increasingly darken the wash without picking up any of the underlying stuff.

This is a Japanese brush that I'm using, which comes in a variety of sizes and is a very useful brush for purposes of this sort. The dampness of the ink wash will cause the paper to swell again and buckle up a little bit, but as it dries it will flatten out to this same degree.

As you will see in looking around the room, I usually have quite a number of works in progress. I have boards with paper stretched on them like this. I have washes in this state. I have over here one where, instead of putting a wash of color on it, I've glued on it a piece of this dark indigo-tinted Japanese paper as a ground. Then there are things in all various kinds of stages over here.

* * *

I like to keep as much of the work that I'm working

on visible as possible so that there are things in all kinds of conditions of completion or sometimes in condition of indecision. I'm very stubborn about abandoning a work, and sometimes they have to stay around for a long time before I solve the problem. But at any rate, I like the opportunity of working from one picture to another because there's a kind of cross-fertilization, I suppose, that goes on.

The actual process of putting these together involves the use of adhesive, and the one which I use most often is called rabbit-skin glue. It's a hide glue that's made from rabbit skins, which are very refined, obviously. It's a very thin, very nearly transparent glue, which has been used by bookbinders for a number of centuries. It's necessary, after this is mixed and warmed, to keep it a little bit warm so that it's fluid, so that I have to heat it here from time to time very gently. I also sometimes use the acrylic medium that is used with acrylic paints. But the thing that I like best about my glue is that it's water soluble, and if I want to remove a piece, I can soak it, dampen it, and peel it away or scrape it away, whereas with the acrylic medium, it is very difficult to make any changes with it.

My actual process of doing this involves--for making the shapes, which are usually fairly simple--instead of

using scissors, I usually use a steel straight edge and a small X-acto knife and cut the shape like this. This produces shapes that are much more precise than I could possibly do with scissors. At other times where I want a rough edge or a kind of feather one, particularly in working with Japanese papers, which have very long fibers, I simply fold and tear them. The fibers pulling out make a very interesting kind of soft edge that can also be manipulated to a certain extent when the paper is dampened with the glue. Because of the size of these elements, and because of one's natural clumsiness, I almost always use tweezers to move things around. I've become so accustomed to this that the tweezers are almost an extension of my hand.

When I have found the right fragment of paper and the right place to put it, I dampen that area with the glue--so --and usually, unless the paper is extremely thin, I also coat the back of the paper with the glue, and then I drop it into place--so--and with this tool, which is a sculptor's plastic tool, I usually use this to press it into place, either with the spatula end or actually to burnish it with this end. These four tools [that is, the steel straightedge, the X-acto knife, the tweezers, and the sculptor's plaster tool] are part of my indispensible working tools--a magnifying glass is a very useful adjunct,

particularly with very fine things--and these, together with a few brushes and a pencil and my T-square, are about the only tools that I really need to make my pictures.

It's a slow process, and it's been, over the years I've used this technique, for me, a very enjoyable one.

INDEX

Abstract expressionism, 47
Ale, Wilma, 2
Anderson, Sherwood, 44
Ankrum, Joan (gallery owner), 79-80
Art Institute of Chicago, 5, 39-40

Bang, Thomas, 29
Bear, Donald, 30, 48-49, 50, 78
Bear, Esther (gallery owner), 33, 76, 77, 78-79, 83
Beckmann, Max, 31-32
Berelsheimer, Hobart, 21
Biala. See Janice Ford
Braque, Georges, 58, 94-95
Brewer, Joseph, 42, 45-46
Broderson, Morris, 79
Bruno, Phillip (gallery owner), 82-83. See also Staempfli, George
Brunswick, Egon, 14
Burne-Jones, Edward, 37
Burri, Alberto, 95-96
  -Sacchi, 58, 95

California Palace of the Legion of Honor (San Francisco), 14-15
California School of Fine Arts (San Francisco), 47
Carnegie, Andrew, 4, 38
Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions (Santa Barbara), 73
Chapman, Cornelia, 88
Chapman, Roger, 88
Chicago World's Fair (1933), 36, 41
Cody's bookstore (Berkeley), 97
Colona i Barberini, Principapessa (gallery owner), 85-86
Cornell, Joseph, 58, 97-98
Cornell, Thomas, 29
Corso, Gaspero del (gallery owner), 85-86
Cowan, Elmer (maternal grandfather), 1
Cuevas, José Luis, 87

Del Chiaro, Mario, 23, 25, 26, 35
Deutschman, Louise, 83
Diebenkorn, Richard, 47
Dole, Edna Cowan (mother), 1
Dole, Kathryn Holcomb (wife), 6, 7, 10, 13, 83, 85
Dole, Kimsey Cowan (brother), 1
Dole, W. Earl (father), 1
Dole, William
  -Exhibitions, 14-15, 18, 50-51, 75-89, 74
    -"William Dole Retrospective 1960-1975," 100-107
  -Teachers
    -Ale, Wilma, 2
    -Haley, John, 11
    -Kepes, Gyorgy, 6
    -Loran, Erle, 9, 10, 11, 12
    -Moholy-Nagy, Laszlo, 5-6, 10
    -Obata, Chiura, 11, 52, 53
    -O'Hagen, Margaret Peterson, 11
    -Parsell, Florence, 1-2
    -Prior, Harris King, 4
    -Rickey, George, 4, 10, 11-12, 47, 78-79, 82-83
    -Schopen, Kenneth, 5
    -Wessels, Glen, 9, 10, 11, 13

Dole, William (continued)
-Works
-Ad Hoc, 65, 106
-Bibliophile, 69-70
-Congeries, 103
-Exemplum, 104
-Ghost Town, 101
-Haybarn, 66-67
-"Memos," 62, 101
-Mono Lake, 62
-Move on Down the Line, 102
-Narrative, 106
-Santa Ana Condition, 101
-"Small Mnemonic Devices," 107
-Strata Data, 60, 67-68
-Te Deum, 104
-Tryst, 105
Downtown Gallery (New York City), 76-77
Duveen, Albert (gallery owner), 74-76, 83, 84
Duveen-Graham Gallery (New York City), 74-76

Eastern Washington State College (Cheney, Washington), 9
Ernst, Max, 95
Evans, Elliott, 17, 52
Evans, Rex (gallery owner), 79-81, 82, 83, 88

Falvi, A., 32-33
Fenci, Renzo, 29
Ford, Ford Madox, 44
Ford, Janice, 44
Fuller, Buckminster, 41

Gardner, Helen, 21, 38
Gebhard, David, 31
Geddis, Ralph (gallery owner), 51, 74
Geddis-Martin Studios (Santa Barbara), 51, 74
Gil, Attilio, 87-88
Graham, Robert (gallery owner), 74-76
Graham Gallery. See Duveen-Graham Gallery

Haley, John, 11
Halpert, Edith (gallery owner), 76-77
Helm, MacKinlay, 78
Herns, George, 90
Hirshhorn, Joseph, 79, 80-81
Horn, Milton, 5

Kepes, Gyorgy, 6
Korzybski, Alfred, 43, 44
Kunzle, David, 27

Lackner, Stephen, 31
Ladies Home Journal (periodical), 36
Landau, Felix, 84
Leavitt, Tom, 90
Lebrun, Rico, 33
Le Corbusier, 43, 44
Lent, Don, 29
Lewinson, Bertha (gallery owner), 76-77, 79-80
Lindberg-Hansen, Jacob, 20
Loewi, Adolph, 32
Loran, Erle, 9, 10, 11, 12
Ludington, Wright, 32, 80

Magazine of Art (periodical), 9
Mallory, Margaret, 32
Martin, Francois (gallery owner), 51, 74
McRoberts, Augusta, 88
McRoberts, Neil (gallery owner), 88-89
McRoberts and Tunnard Gallery (London), 88-89
Mills College, 5-6
Mills, Paul, 95-96
Moholy-Nagy, Laszlo, 5-6, 10
Moir, Alfred, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 35
Morgenroth, Sigmund--collection of medals, 35

Munich school, 39

Neuhaus, Eugen, 11

Oakland Museum (Oakland, California), 14
Obata, Chiura, 11, 52, 53
O'Hagen, Margaret Peterson, 11
Olivet College (Olivet, Michigan), 3-5, 42-46
  -writers and artists in residence, 43-45
On Architecture (book by William Lescaze), 13

Parsell, Florence, 1-2
Pepper, Stephen, 13-14
Perls, Frank, 84
Picasso, Pablo, 57, 70, 71, 94-95
Pierson, Jiggs Conway, 24
Prior, Harris King, 4

Rickey, George, 4, 10, 11-12, 47, 78-79, 82-83
Rothko, Mark, 47
Ryan, Anne, 58, 95

Sagittarius Gallery (Rome), 85-86
Sandburg, Carl, 44
Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 30, 50, 100
Schopen, Kenneth, 5
Schwitters, Kurt, 56-57, 58, 70, 89-93
Scully, Jodi (gallery owner owner), 82, 86
Sedgwick collection, 33-35
Seldis, Henry, 77
Smith, F. Hopkinson, 38-39
  -Outdoor Sketching, 38-39
Smith, Hassel, 47
Social realism, 47
Souza, Antonio (gallery owner), 86-88
Springer, Eva Marie, 84
Springer, Rudolf (gallery owner), 84-85
Staempfli, George (gallery owner), 82-83, 86
Stein, Gertrude, 43, 44
Steinberg, Saul, 98-99
  -Passport, The, 98
Still, Clyfford, 47
Story, Ala, 32, 34, 75, 86, 88

Tamarind Institute (Albuquerque, New Mexico), 81, 83, 107
Troche, Gunther, 34
Tunnard, Peter (gallery owner), 88-89

University of California, Berkeley, 10-11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 28, 48
  -Berkeley school, 13
University of California, Santa Barbara, 15-35, 62, 110
  -Art Affiliates, 33
  -art department
    -art history v. studio art, 27-28
    -buildings, 23, 24-25, 29-32
    -change from crafts to fine arts focus, 16-17, 19-20
    -faculty, 16-18, 20, 23-29. See also Bang, Thomas; Cornell, Thomas; Del Chiaro, Mario; Evans, Elliott; Fenci, Renzo; Gebhard, David; Kunzle, David; Lent, Don; Lindberg-Hansen, Jacob; Moir, Alfred; Pierson, Jiggs Conway; Warshaw, Howard
  -art gallery, 23, 29-35
  -art library, 21-22
  -campus, 20-21, 22-23, 24-25, 29-32
  -Isla Vista riots, 26-27

Vanity Fair (periodical), 41
Varda, Jean, 96-97
Virgil A. Warren Advertising, 9

Warshaw, Howard, 23
Weatherford, Jim (gallery owner), 80, 82. *See also* Evans, Rex
Wessels, Glen, 9, 10, 11, 13

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